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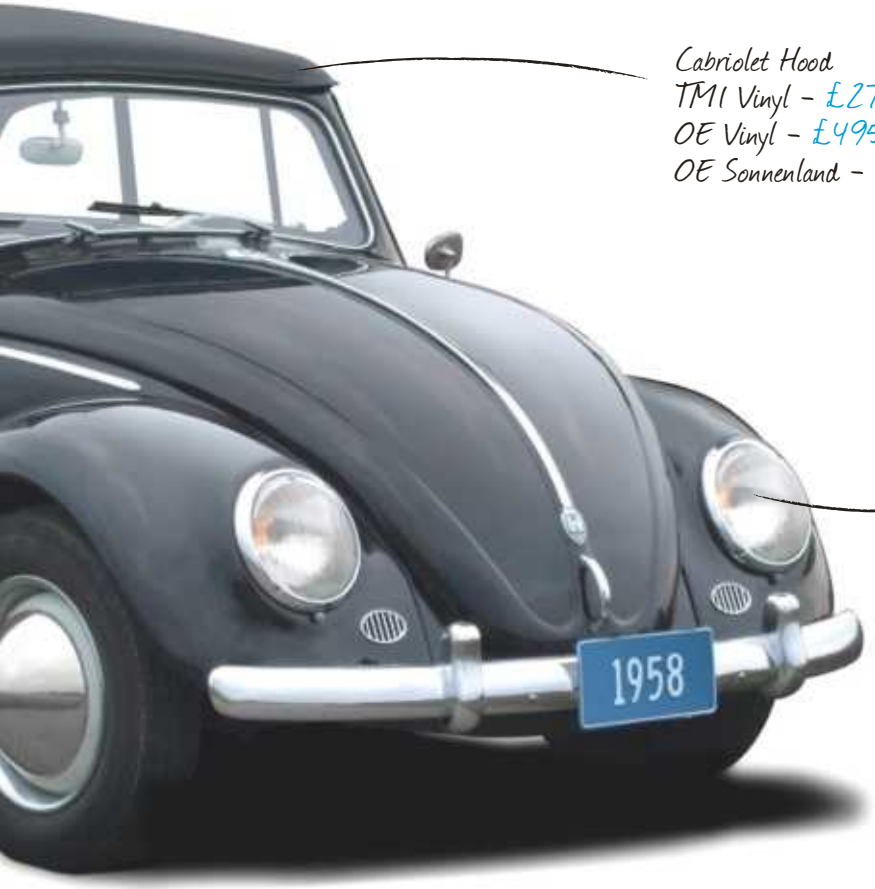

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THIS MONTH

06 Welcome
How do we attract the next generation?

08 Air we go
Early season show dates

13 Starter motor
News, products and opinions

18 Readers Rides
Get your car featured

20 Blasts from the past
The mystery of the Abbey Road Beetle

87 Next month
See what's coming up

98 Tailpipe
The VW powered hovercraft

Back issues

If there's a gap in your *VolksWorld* collection visit **shop.kelsey.co.uk/issue/list/publication/VWW**

CONTENTS

May 2017

PRACTICAL VolksWorld

Subscribe & Save – page 92

FEATURE CARS

24 '59 Ascort
Australian coachbuilt beauty

32 '72 1300 Beetle
Lovingly restored as a 'first car'

40 '66 Split Window
US import with Scooby power

48 '67 Beetle
Ebay buy solid in all the right places

56 '70 Bay Window
Serious rot didn't put this owner off

PRACTICAL *VOLKSWORLD*

62 Workshop walkabout
We drop in on Classic Car Revivals

68 Beetle Buying
How to sort the nuggets from the nails

78 Cal-Look project
Cathal's so near, but so far

82 Beetle tank swap
Ian fits a replacement fuel tank

88 Alternator conversion
We show you how to make the switch

VOLKS WORLD

Next month

The June 2017 issue of *VolksWorld* goes on sale

Friday 5 May

Don't miss it!

THE EDITOR

Editor Ian Cushway – volksworld.ed@kelsey.co.uk

Welcome to the mag

My kids love cars, especially old ones. Even my youngest son who's nine keeps on telling me about what car he's going to buy when he gets older. It changes all the time of course – at the moment he's swaying between a Bugatti Veyron and the Capri used in *The Professionals*. Which got me thinking. Exactly what cars *will* the younger generation be enthusing over in the decades to come? My offspring are hardly unusual in their fascination with technology and, while they are thankfully far from being glued to their 'phones and computer games, it does play a part in their lives. When the 'yoof' of today get together, they're either chasing Pokemon monsters or talking about the latest gadgets. Yet when I was their age, I was busy watching my dad working on a Beetle or Bus. It was all about cars – and obviously not just VWs. A mate had a 1275 Mini, another had a Herald and one real rebel drove a red Marina. And when we weren't having fun behind the wheel, we were on our driveways fixing them.

I know, I am probably sounding like a miserably old git – but there's a serious side to all this. I am a bit worried that the passion we've all got for cars will eventually fade away. The fun of fiddling about on an old car at the weekend will be replaced by social media and hours of pointless texting. I sometimes wonder whether the next generation will be bothered about cars at all.

To make matters worse, as the price of our air-cooled VWs escalate, younger enthusiasts are being priced out of the marketplace, which is why they're turning to modern classics like the Golf instead. If this happens, my fear is that the air-cooled scene will be populated solely by old duffers like me. I'm not the only one who's concerned – as you'll read on page 13, even the big car manufacturers recognise the need to encourage young people to get into older cars.

I've still got a long list of things to do on the Beetle, but it's beginning to look a bit more presentable now

> "if you're changing your engine oil or whipping out a spark plug, get the kids involved"

So what can we do? The short answer is just to be mindful of including the next generation, offering encouragement and avoid being too exclusive so we can pass on our passion. And that's how our cover star, Molly Taylor, got into the scene (see pages 32-38). So, if you're changing your engine oil or whipping out a spark plug, get the kids involved. Even if it does mean prising them away from their technology!

Back to this issue, and we've got a brilliant mix of cars – even if I say so myself. There's also an interesting story about the Abbey Road Beetle on pages 20-21, which prompted me to dig out an old picture of when I walked across that famous crossing. There wasn't a VW in shot, sadly, but we did get a Mini and Routemaster instead.

We've given Lloyd Jackson and the crew at Deluxe Metalwork a month off for obvious reasons, but we'll pick up on the Split Bug restoration series again next month with an in-depth look at the engine rebuild.

Meanwhile, I've got my new fuel tank fitted in the Beetle so I am no longer being suffocated by petrol fumes. There's always more jobs to do, of course, but I am not going to let them stop me getting out in it and making the most of the lighter evenings!

Ian Cushway

Editor

That's me at the front with the purple flares. It was shot for *Practical Classics* magazine in 1996

What do you think?

Let us know what you'd like to see in the magazine – email volksworld.ed@kelsey.co.uk

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Show calendar

Make a date in your diary for these forthcoming shows both here and in mainland Europe

April

Schwarzwälder VW-Bus Treffen
Date: 7-9 April 2017
Location: Kirchzarten, Germany
Contact: www.vwbus-team-baden.de

Vee Dub Family Birthday Weekender
Date: 7-9 April 2017
Location: The Oak Tree Arena, Highbridge, Somerset
Contact: weekender@veedubfamily.org

Elemental VW Show
Date: 8 April 2017
Location: Crouch Valley Showground, Rayleigh, Essex
Contact: www.elementalvw.org.uk

Elsecar at the Races
Date: 9 April 2017
Location: Doncaster Racecourse
Contact: www.elsecarattheraces.com

CamperFest
Date: 13-17 April 2017
Location: Chester Racecourse
Contact: www.camperfest.co.uk

Bus Types VW Show
Date: 14-16 April 2017
Location: Oswestry Showground, Shropshire
Contact: www.bus-types.co.uk

Big Bang Camper & Bus Show
Date: 21-23 April 2017
Location: Santa Pod Raceway, Northants
Contact: www.big-bang.co.uk

Vintage at Zandvoort
Date: 21-23 April 2017
Location: Zandvoort, Holland
Contact: www.vintage-at-zandvoort.nl

VW Tomie
Date: 28-April/1 May 2017
Location: Orsett Showground, Essex
Contact: www.vw-tomie.co.uk

Dubs at the Farm
Date: 28-30 April 2017
Location: Woofferton, Ludlow
Contact: en-gb.facebook.com/groups/65385326360

Stanford Hall
Date: 30 April 2017
Location: Lutterworth, Leics
Contact: www.stanfordhallvw.com

Run a show?
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email VolksWorld.ed@kelsey.co.uk

May

Maikäfer Treffen
Date: 1 May 2017
Location: Hannover, Germany
Contact: www.maikaefertreffen.de

Kevertreffen Hoeilaart
Date: 1 May 2017
Location: Hoeilaart, Belgium
Contact: www.kevertref-hoeilaart.be

Vanwest
Date: 5-7 May 2017
Location: Brean Sands, Somerset
Contact: www.vanwest.net

Bulli-Days
Date: 5-7 May 2017
Location: Vöhl-Herzhausen, Germany
Contact: www.bulli-days.de

Meeting VW
Date: 5-7 May 2017
Location: Saint-Maur, France
Contact: facebook.com/Lescopainsdelacox

Earlybay Campout
Date: 5-7 May 2017
Location: Banbury
Contact: www.earlybay.com

Bug Run Picnic
Date: 6 May 2017
Location: Gårdet, Stockholm, Denmark
Contact: www.bugrun.com

VW-Audi Treffen
Date: 13-14 May 2017
Location: Tuggen, Switzerland
Contact: www.vw-audi-treffen-hochybrig.ch

Döbelner Bushaltestelle
Date: 25-28 May 2017
Location: Döbeln, Germany
Contact: www.kaeferbande-doebeln.com

Maggiopeople
Date: 26-28 May 2017
Location: Tornaco, Italy
Contact: www.maggiolino.it

VolksRiders Camp Meet
Date: 26-28 May 2017
Location: Madrid, Spain
Contact: facebook/volksridersMadrid

June

Bullitreffen am Murnersee
Date: 2-5 June 2017
Location: Murnersee, Germany
Contact: http://vw-bustreffen-murnersee.npage.de

Bug Run
Date: 9-11 June 2017
Location: Mantorp Park Raceway, Mjölby, Sweden
Contact: www.bugrun.com

Bristol Volksfest
Date: 9-11 June 2017
Location: Birches Farm, Bristol BS41 9AG
Contact: www.bristolvolksfest.co.uk

Hurst Dubfest
Date: 9-11 June 2017
Location: Hurst View, Lymington, Hants SO41 8AL
Contact: www.hurstdubfest.co.uk

Nordsee Bulli Treffen
Date: 9-11 June 2017
Location: Wesselburenerkoog, Germany
Contact: www.nordseebullitreffen.de.to

VarWagen
Date: 10-11 June 2017
Location: l'Argentière à La Londe-Les-Maures, France
Contact: www.varwagen.com

Oberweser Bulli Treffen
Date: 15-18 June 2017
Location: Oberweser, Germany
Contact: www.oberweserbulli.jimdo.de

Mighty Dub Fest
Date: 16-18 June 2017
Location: Alnwick Castle, Northumberland NE66 1NQ
Contact: www.mightydubfest.co.uk

VW Bus Treffen
Date: 16-18 June 2017
Location: Mörel, Switzerland
Contact: http://vwbustreffen.ch

VW Bus Treffen
Date: 16-18 June 2017
Location: Lichterfeld, Germany
Contact: www.bulli-den.de

Air-Watercooled
Date: 18 June 2017
Location: Eghezée, Belgium
Contact: www.air-watercooled.com

VW Käfer Treffen
Date: 18 June 2017
Location: Wettstetten, Germany
Contact: www.franzlsvw.de

European Bug-In
Date: 30 June-2 July 2017
Location: Chimay, Belgium
Contact: www.europeanbugin.com

VW Bus Treffen Barracuda Beach
Date: 30 June-2 July 2017
Location: Neustadt-Glewe, Germany
Contact: www.barracuda-beach.de/vw-bus-treffen

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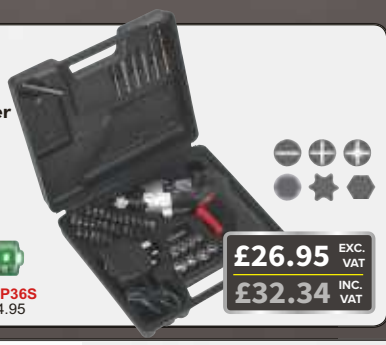

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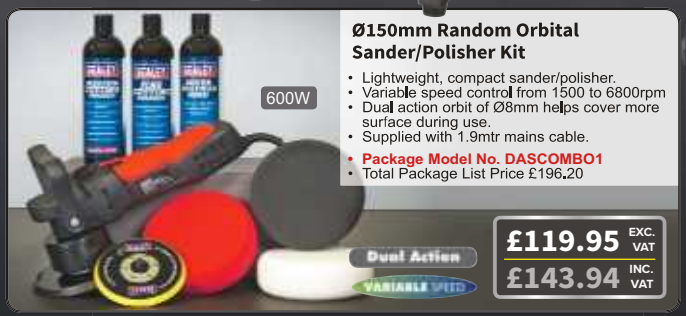

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Dubs for the next generation

So who's going to look after our cars and share our passion in the years to come?

The world's largest and most respected car manufacturers, including Volkswagen, gathered in February to discuss the future of our hobby. Invited to Paris by the Fédération Internationale des Véhicles Anciens (FIVA), the debate specifically centred on how the industry could make the preservation and enjoyment of classic cars attractive and attainable for young enthusiasts. As well as key representatives from the heritage department at VW, the forum included spokespeople from Aston Martin, Audi, BMW, Bugatti, Groupe PSA, Jaguar Land Rover, Mercedes-Benz and Volvo.

Said FIVA's vice president Dr Mario Theissen: "Engaging the interest of the younger generation is crucial to the future of the historic vehicle movement and a vital part of FIVA's long-term strategy."

The meeting in Paris followed on from discussions organised by FIVA with young enthusiasts last November when a panel quizzed a number of youngsters from the UK, France, Holland, Poland and India about their interest in older cars. A video of these interviews, which highlighted the importance of workshops and school programmes, as well as FIVA-backed apprenticeships, was shown to representatives from the various manufacturers' heritage departments. This in turn sparked a lively and useful debate on how the industry can work together to bring the younger generation on board.

Reporting on the outcome in Paris, Theissen commented: "We were delighted to see how the manufacturers are committed to introducing a younger audience to the joys of historic motoring, whether it's by supporting motoring events for younger people, ensuring there are plenty of attractions and entertainments at marque musuems or developing apprenticeship programmes for students and young professionals."

We reckon the strong UK VW scene is reasonably well geared up when it comes to welcoming the younger generation, particularly regarding organised kid's activities at shows. But could we be doing more to attract the future custodians for our cars to ensure their survival? Enthusiasm for the marque often trickles down through the generations, but is there anything we can do to encourage the teenage Ford Focus or MINI driver into a Bus or Beetle?

Answers on a postcard, please…

Got a story?
Tell us by emailing volksworld.ed@kelsey.co.uk

REMEMBER THIS?

10 years ago...

Who could have forgotten Justin Dawson's Resto Cal Beetle which adorned the cover a decade ago with its John Gurney-built 2110cc engine, vented Cabrio bootlid and full Bentley stitched beige Connolly leather interior? Being a '53, it was profiled as being one of the first right-hand drive Beetles in existence. Funnily enough, Justin was torn between taking it on as an unfinished project (it belonged to a friend of his) or buying a project Porsche 356. They were about the same money at the time!

JK open day tickets available

The 10th annual JK Open Day takes place on Saturday 17 June 2017, with camping available from 16-18 June 2017. Entry on the day is free, and camping tickets are now on sale for £25, with 100% of the money raised going to Cancer Research UK. The event takes place at JK HQ in Odiham, Hampshire, and is an amazing, laid-back weekend. For the first time ever, there'll be an outdoor cinema on the Friday and Saturday nights. Plus, there will be a silent disco provided by Bug Bar, and the JK photo booth and music. As always, JK will be displaying some of their newest products, as well as their 2017 camping range. There will also be exclusive discounts over the weekend, which will definitely be worth looking out for. The JK Team will be on hand, too, to take orders and answer any questions you might have.

When it comes to keeping the kids happy, don't worry because there will be face painting, inflatable slides and the Arty Kids crafts area. Nice one JK.

Latest Stuff

SPEAKER TO ME

From: **www.retromanufacturing.com**
Price: **$89.99**

This 6.5in Retro Sound dual voice coil dash replacement speaker gives you a stereo mix from your single dash speaker location. Clever, eh? It uses a Neodymium magnet structure for high power handling in a slim-mount design and a Santoprene® surround delivers the most natural sound possible with no distortion.

Meanwhile, dual mylar tweeters produce crisp, clear highs. Best of all, a special Volkswagen dash bracket is included. It fits all Beetles made from 1958-'77.

KEEP IT SAFE

From: **www.nkgroup.co.uk**
Price: **from £105**

Theft of classic Dubs is on the increase but NK Group's Clutch Claw will help deter even the most determined tea leaf from stealing your pride and joy. It works by attaching to the clutch and brake pedals, thus preventing it being driven away. Simple and easy to fit, the Clutch Claw acts as a deterrent both at home, in your garage or on your driveway, and while you are out on your travels.

The standard Clutch Claw fits all Spilt Screen, T25, T4, T5 and T6 models and is priced at £105. However, NK Group has now developed a model to fit the Bay Window and T2 Models priced at £115.

LEADING LIGHT

From: **www.justkampers.com**
Price: **£19.50**

Most of us could use a little extra light in our campers, and this aluminium reading light (J41411) is such a good way of getting it. The light has 12 bright LED bulbs and a flexible neck that you can angle around. The best bit, though, is that you can charge up to two mobile devices or tablets through the integrated USB ports.

GUARD OF HONOUR

From: www.aircooledaccessories.com
Price: £120

It takes time and money keeping your body in good shape, so why let a few stone chips spoil it? Beetle gravel guards have been around for yonks, but now Aircooled Accessories has protection for the Type 3 as well. They're available for the front and rear and are made from fully polished aluminium, just like the originals. They are a perfect fit and are supplied with all the stainless steel hardware to enable you to bolt them straight on.

INSTANT CAMPING

From: www.opuscamper.co.uk
Price: from £15,495

Here's something totally new – the world's first folding camper / trailer tent with air technology. That's right, AIR OPUS uses air pole technology to inflate the camper in just 90 seconds, reducing overall setup time and removing traditional poles completely. An electric pump is fitted inside, so all it takes is a press of a switch for the air tubes to do their magic and then head inside to complete the interior setup. The air technology also aids in a speedy pack down. Simply release the valves and all air poles deflate, saving space inside the OPUS when compared to the pole version. A further option will be the dedicated full awning, again using air pole technology. It will dramatically reduce setup time when travelling as a large party and features fixed bed ends with both roof and side windows in the bedroom areas, thus providing a larger internal floor area.

BEETLE BUYING?

We've all no doubt got our own horror stories when it comes to buying a Beetle, which is precisely why we've included a greenhorn guide to help sort the diamonds from the real duffers this issue on pages 68-73. Sure, chances are we all know the pleasures and potential pitfalls of buying a Bug – but people are still getting caught out big time. Take it from the specialists who see customers arrive on a regular basis with their new purchases and end up having to break the news that they've just bought a heap of junk. Here's some words of wisdom from some of them if you're thinking of catching a Bug...

>> Grant Eggleton
Beetlelink (www.beetlelink.co.uk)

"Obviously you need to look at the structure, as all the mechanical parts are easily and cheaply replaced and all this work can happily be undertaken by a competent enthusiast. Beetles are definitely gaining in value and bargains can now be quite hard to find unless you're willing to go for a complete basket case."

>> Alexis Leventis
Henley Beetles (01189 403464)

"Don't be fooled by shiny paintwork, it's what's lurking underneath that matters most. Check the heater channels and floors first, because if there are holes in them they're likely to prove the most expensive job for a welder. A good bet is to buy a '60s car that's already had restoration work which will be a fraction of the cost doing the restoration work yourself. And get someone who knows what they are looking at to view the car with you. The perfect Beetle is one that's had all its rusty panels replaced but the paintwork's rubbish. I like early Bugs but if you don't mind the 1303's plastic dash, go for one of those instead."

Car history crucial

Recent research by a specialist auction house has revealed that a good history file can enhance the resale value of any classic by up to 20 per cent. The fatter the pile of documents you have for your car the better, so the general advice if you want to create a history file is throw nothing away! Keep copies of bills, receipts and any other expense that relates to your car then put it in date order. It's worth applying for an official VW birth certificate (visit www.volkswagen-automuseum.de) to confirm its build date, original colour, trim and any options fitted.

If your file's looking a little light, you can quickly bolster it with a bit of detective work. Contact the person you bought your car from and ask if they have any contacts. Failing that look on any garage invoices – they'll often have a phone number for the customer who had the work carried out. If you are lucky enough to trace a previous owner, ask them the dates when they owned the car and enquire if they happen to have any paperwork for it still. It's amazing what people hang on to!

Being able to provide a visual timeline of your car is important, so gather together any shots you have of when you first bought it, the car at shows, or in different locations. If it goes in to have work done, grab some shots while they're doing it – this all serves as evidence to back up your story that it's been maintained throughout its life.

Finally, invest in a proper file to put everything in. Start it with a description of the vehicle, it's build date, chassis number, engine number and so on. If you have a sales brochure for your era car, again, put this at the front of the file to 'set the scene'. Then it's a case of making sure everything is in date order so potential buyers can follow your car's story from when it was made to the present day. Mark owner changes with dates – and make sure everything tallies. It's worth making the effort.

Sounding Board

>> Steve Johnson
Johnson Autoworks (www.johnsonautoworks.com)

"It's a bit of a minefield to be honest. Don't worry about the mechanical stuff, because that's easy to deal with. If an engine goes bang, you can go out and buy another one. If it's rotten and stuffed with filler, that's a different matter. Ideally, you need to take up the carpets, remove the back seat, check underneath and go over it to see what needs doing. If you buy a restored car, you need evidence of what's been done. Talk to the people who did it, ask to see pictures and look out for bodges. Really, originality is king so if you can buy a rust-free Californian import and get it painted, that's probably the best option. That said, I've seen US cars with filler in them. Finally, don't underestimate the cost of a full restoration – I know of someone who spent £40,000 on a 1302 project."

<< Barney Dines
VW Heritage (www.vwheritage.com)

"I've owned a few Beetles over the years and my advice to anyone interested in buying their first Bug is to get a copy of John Muir's book *How to Keep Your Volkswagen Alive* and read it like a novel. It will give you a good understanding of the car and possibly save you a fortune in the long run. Don't buy blind, and if you're not sure what you're looking at – take a friend who does, buy from a reputable dealer or seek the advice of one of the many specialists that advertise here in *VolksWorld*. Now is a great time to buy as Beetle prices haven't really followed the crazy price rises of Buses. They seem to be edging up now, but they're still a great value classic car."

BUILT NOT BOUGHT?

The debate about whether it's best to buy or build continues to rumble through the VW scene, but why are people still getting so hot under the collar?

There's stickers about it, baseball caps embroidered with the BNB initials, and even a dedicated website. But what's at the root of the Built not Bought mantra?

In a nutshell, the argument suggests that doing the hard graft yourself is the only way to go. Builds by professionals where the owner simply turns up at the end to sign a cheque are generally frowned upon.

It's easy to see both sides. There's a real sense of satisfaction to be had from doing it yourself, thinking outside the box to come up with something unique or applying a custom solution to a problem. It's these totally bespoke builds that feature lots of clever, totally inspired details that make the VW world a much richer place.

The thing is, to do this you not only need the necessary engineering prowess but also the tools and time to execute the fabrication. Indeed, it seems time is the big factor in the built not bought argument. Most of us have so little of it these days, that even if we did have the know with all to work on our cars, we wouldn't have the necessary gap in our daily routines

> **"There's a real sense of satisfaction to be had from doing it yourself"**

to mock something up, get it wrong a few times then start all over again until it's perfect.

Yet there's a culture of shame which makes people who love VWs but who don't have the time, desire or necessary skills to build something themselves feel totally rubbish.

There's an argument also that says that if we all 'built' there wouldn't be any specialist builders out there. These are the real craftsmen, the ideas people with the skills to make something special, that are happy to turn something round for someone else – and have the funding at the end – so that they can crack on with their next new project.

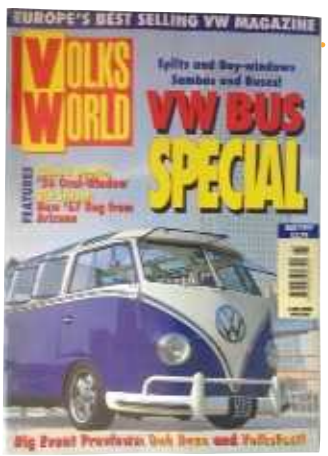
If you don't have the required DIY skills, the results can end up looking like a right dog's dinner. Indeed, we suspect there's lots of people out there who have 'had a go' themselves without having the right knowledge or equipment, spent a bucketload of cash and ended up with something that looks horrible and drives like a nail.

Of course the middle road is when an owner has their own fresh ideas and a custom builder adds their expertise to make it a reality. They collaborate, feed off each other – and come up with something they can both take a bit of credit for. What do you think?

REMEMBER THIS?

20 years ago...

In May 1997 there was a reader letter that questioned why a Beetle with no paint on the bootlid won Best Custom award at that year's *VolksWorld* Show at Sandown Park. The outraged correspondent went on to suggest that we would have to do some 'serious groveling' to make up for our incompetence. Needless to say the ever diplomatic Ivan McCutcheon wrote a lengthy reply putting the reader right, confirming the credibility of our judging – as well as justifying precisely why Richie King's orange Oval with its handmade aluminium W-decklid received the adoration it deserved. As for the groveling, well, two decades on and we're still having to do that on occasion...



Car of the month

Luke's rust-free '57 Oval was imported from Florida. But wait a minute, isn't Florida all wet and swampy?

Luke Ramsay, 1957 Oval Window Beetle

Luke Ramsay's 1957 Beetle is a relatively recent addition to the UK's classic Volkswagen population, having been imported from Florida in September 2015. "The Beetle was being offered for sale on ebay and TheSamba.com so I contacted the vendor, who sent me some photos of the car. We subsequently struck a deal and sorted out the shipping," explains Luke. "The car arrived in the UK at Southampton Docks which is where I collected it from." Resplendent in the fabulous colour of Coral Red, this Beetle is a real head turner, though Luke says the matching Coral Red interior trim isn't period correct. Nevertheless, it still looks superb. The engine is a 1200cc, but not the original one.

> "my Oval represents a nice, clean and very usable car – which is exactly what I was looking for"

Since purchasing the Beetle Luke has carried out a few jobs, such as replacing the rear axle gaiters, fitting new front wheel bearings, king and link pins, etc. He has also added a few accessories, like the chrome headlamp peaks, had the wheels painted and fitted a set of crossply whitewall tyres, which only further enhance the car's aesthetic appeal. When we spoke to him, Luke had plans to join The Historic Volkswagen Club and hoped to get along to quite a few shows in his Oval. "Previously I owned a 1964 Beetle for 16 years but that needed a full restoration, which would have entailed an awful lot of work," says Luke. "Overall my Oval represents a nice, clean and very usable car – which is exactly what I was looking for, and I love driving it."

Being brutally honest, we're not too keen on the colour coding, but the engine bay certainly looks tidy

Those seats have been retrimmed but nevertheless it looks like someone's done a good job with the sewing machine

Tim Bussell, 1971 Legend Porsche Speedster replica

Tim's the driving force behind the Pure Nostalgia Classic Car & Retro Show held at The Lawn in Rochford, Essex. His wife owns a Karmann Ghia that has graced these pages in the past, so when Tim had the opportunity of acquiring a VW-based Porsche Speedster replica, he jumped at the chance. "I looked at a few Speedster replicas before purchasing this one. The thing that appealed was that it's made from a very strong fibreglass mould, and for that reason looked more original than others I saw," stated Tim.

"Legend produced one of the first Porsche Speedster replicas back in the 1980s and I purchased my car in the spring of 2016," he continues. "The engine is a 1600cc twin port, which is powerful enough for a car with a tubular frame and fibreglass body. The replica had been stored for around 10 years under a cover and there's a few microblisters here and there where it's sweated. So far Tim's completed some recommissioning work, refurbished the brakes and got it back on the road again, ready for the summer, though it's still work in progress. "Once all the remaining jobs are done and the car is mechanically sound, I'll sort out the paintwork issues and when I'm finished, I'll have really sound and very pretty Speedster replica," he smiles.

> Twin port 1600 lump is adequate in something as light as this, says Tim

< The interior's been finished in pale grey, with grey trimmed bucket seats and red piping. Keeping the elements at bay is a top quality mohair soft top

Brandon Hargrave, 1975 Beetle

Playing lead guitar with the Hertfordshire based band, Franklin, Brandon Hargrave was keen to acquire a Beetle to restore, that could also feature in the band's promotional video. He spotted a 1975 Beetle on ebay for £1,000 and purchased it unseen in 'barn find' condition in Liverpool in 2015. Alas, when he arrived to trailer it home, it wasn't quite as good as he was hoping it would be. "I got the welder over to my garage and he started going over the bodywork with his hammer, which ultimately led to most of the panels having to be replaced," explains Brandon. The interior was originally black, but Brandon purchased another set of cream seats secondhand and sold the black set.

The car was Miami Blue, but Brandon wanted a two-tone finish and painted the lower half cream, which perfectly complements the interior. Mechanical work centred around recommissioning after the lay-up and included fitting a new front beam with a slightly lowered ride height and getting things like the brakes working again. The original 1300cc engine didn't require any work at all and, what's more, having sat in a barn for 10 years, the 20,000 miles on the odometer is believed to be correct! "One of my next jobs is to detail the engine and I also plan on lowering it at the rear.

Brandon loves surfing, spending much time in Cornwall during the summer months, hence the 'Surf's Up' theme. All he needs now then is a bit of sunshine!

> Despite having spent the last 10 years in a barn, there's less than 20,000 miles on the clock of Brandon's Bug – lucky devil

< It's sitting on a set of new eight-spoke Empi-style chrome rims, purchased from VW Heritage

WANT TO SEE YOUR CAR IN VOLKSWORLD?

Then email volksworld.ed@kelsey.co.uk Subject: Readers' rides

Caught on camera

Paul McCartney apparently died in 1966 and we know this partly thanks to a white 1968 Volkswagen. *VolksWorld* unravels the clues in this most incredible of Beetle and Beatle tales

Words
Richard Gunn

Abbey Road is now a place of pilgrimage for *Beatles* fans, including this writer (pretending to be Paul), who was able to supply his own white Beetle

Name the most famous Volkswagen Beetle. Oh, alright, it's Herbie. But the second most famous one then? You could be forgiven for not immediately knowing LMW 281F – although that registration is rather important – but you've probably all seen it, and even have a picture of it.

The Beetle in question is a 1968 Lotus White 1500 model and on 1969's *Abbey Road* album cover, it is the fifth Beatle. It's parked by the EMI recording studios in the London street after which the LP was named, where the Fab Four recorded most of their music. In front of it, John, Paul, Ringo and George walk over the pedestrian crossing that has now become such a place of pilgrimage for fans. This appearance alone, on a 31 million-selling rock album, would have guaranteed it fame and immortality. But there's even more intrigue behind this Beetle's brush with *The Beatles*.

"The Beetle was catapulted to instant fame"

Conspiracy theory

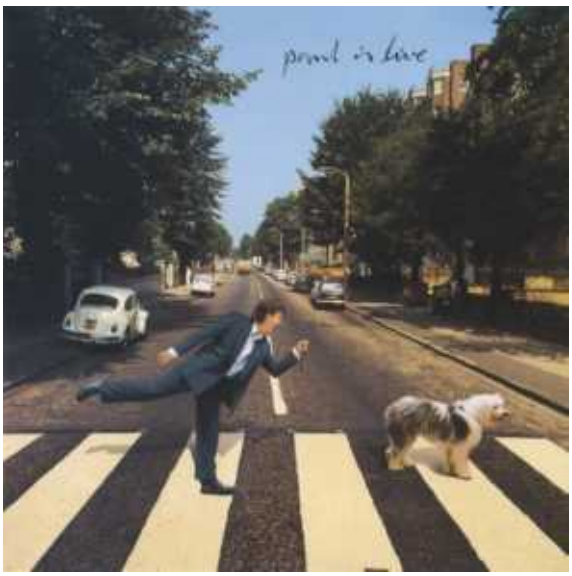
The Abbey Road shot was taken on the morning of 8 August 1969 by photographer Iain Macmillan. While police held up traffic – hence the Morris Commercial J4 police van parked on the right – Iain took 10 minutes for six shots of the Fabs repeatedly crossing the road while he perched on a stepladder. The Beetle, parked half on the pavement in the background, caused some annoyance, according to the celebrated Scottish snapper. "The car just happened to be standing there. It had been left there by someone on holiday. Nobody with any connection to *The Beatles*. A policeman tried to move it away for us, but he couldn't."

Actually, it belonged to a local resident of the block of flats opposite, who had absolutely no idea of the repercussions of his simple act of slightly bad parking. You see, the 1960s were a weird and wonderful time. There were a lot of mind-altering substances around, which *The Beatles* themselves weren't exactly disapproving of. In fact, if you'd listened to *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* during the decade and not been stoned, then frankly, you just weren't hearing it properly. Thus, in the same month that Abbey Road came out, a bunch of US college kids, no doubt considerably under the influence, started a rumour that Paul McCartney had died and been replaced by a lookalike. The three genuine Beatles had peppered (sorry) their album artwork and music with signs, one of the most prominent of which was the *Abbey Road* Volkswagen and its numberplate.

The theory went that, after a band argument in November 1966, Macca had angrily driven off in his car, crashed and been

The Beetle on display in Volkswagen's museum in Wolfsburg

The Beetle's star LP cover appearance, alongside a quartet of even more famous Beatles



The Beetle was used again on the 1993 *Paul is Live* album, with its numberplate suitably updated

killed. In a conspiracy up there with John F Kennedy being shot by Elvis during a fake moon landing – okay, we may be getting our secret plots a little mixed there – his place had been taken by William Shears Campbell, who'd previously won a McCartney lookalike competition. John, George and Ringo didn't want to cause their adoring public any grief, apparently. So they all grew moustaches and went distinctly psychedelic to help disguise the new Paul. However, with a woeful lack of logic and restraint, they also started dropping big clues. For example, at the end of *Strawberry Fields Forever*, John supposedly said "I buried Paul" (he didn't, it was a random "cranberry sauce" utterance instead). The *Sgt Pepper* cover was meant to be *The Beatles* and mourners gathered around Paul's grave, while in the photo on the back of the LP, he was the only bandmember with his back turned. Billy Shears was namechecked on the LP too. On the following year's *White Album*, if you played Revolution 9 backwards, some people heard the line "Turn me on, dead man". There were supposedly hundreds of hints, all of them palpable nonsense. 'Paul' himself denied reports of his death. But then again, he would, wouldn't he? Even without Twitter or Facebook to feed it, the story spread across the globe, via radio, newspapers and magazines.

Road to reason

With *Abbey Road*, the cover was meant to portray a funeral procession – John the priest in white, Ringo the undertaker in black, Paul (barefoot) in grey, and out of step with the others, the corpse, while George brought up the rear as a denim-clad undertaker. But it was the background Beetle that really fed the rumours.

Its numberplate was LMW 281F. And if you were desperately searching for hints that one of the most famous people in the world wasn't who he claimed to be, that could be read as 'Linda McCartney Weeps, 28 IF', meaning Paul would have been 28 IF he'd lived. In actual fact, he was 27 but who cared about a little detail like that?

The Beetle was catapulted to instant fame… so much so that in the following years, its numberplate was repeatedly nicked. In 1986, the car was snapped up by *Beatles* fan and guitar shop owner Peter Gent for a very cheap £450 after he came across it on a garage forecourt, presumably owned by somebody who preferred the Rutles and thus had little idea of its significance. Soon afterwards though, it was sold at a Sotherby's auction for £2530 to an American collector. Fast forward to the summer of 1999 and the Beetle was again under the hammer. This time, Volkswagen itself acquired it and the Beetle went back to its birthplace, for display in Wolfsburg's Autostadt museum. However, to add even more riddle and confusion, the accompanying noticeboard claimed that the car was a 1300 model and had been ordered by John Lennon in 1967 to use as daily transportation. Imagine, Volkswagen being economical with the truth…

Homer, Madge, Bart and Lisa. Maggie was presumably parking the Beetle

Volkswagen took a Beetle back to Abbey Road in 2012. Unfortunately, it was the wrong kind

The Beetle's legacy endures. The car reappeared on William Shears Campbell's – sorry, Paul McCartney's – 1993 *Paul is Live* album, albeit with its numberplate altered to '51IS', the musician's actual age at the time. It's been parodied by *The Simpsons* among countless other pastiches, and Volkswagen took the latest generation Beetle to Abbey Road in 2012 for publicity purposes. Even this writer couldn't resist illegally parking his own white Beetle up for a tribute photoshoot with friends several years ago. As yet though, nobody has come up with a decent enough myth to explain its PEL 154M registration. Over to you, conspiracy theorists…

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One for the road

Australia's Jeff Sabel has combined his love of Volkswagens and Porsches with this intriguing 1950's Ascort

Words Ian Cushway **Photos** Darren Gerlach

ASCORT

The front end features integrated glass fibre bumpers, which were kicked up in the centre to make provision for the number plate and Renrade sealed beam driving lamps

Recognise those headlamps? They're either early Beetle or Porsche 356 6V units

Fluted bootlid lifts off to provide access to the engine. Those twin vents are modified Oval Window dash grilles. Ingenious, eh?

The spare wheel was cleverly positioned to be energy absorbing in the event of a front end smash

Ever been to a classic car auction? If you have, you'll know the pluck needed to raise your hand, and the flush of euphoria if yours is the hand held highest when the hammer falls. Just imagine then what Australian, Jeffrey Sabel, felt when it was his hand in the air at the auction where this ultra rare 1959 Ascort TSV 1300 came up for sale.

That was in October 2007, when the car was entered into Shannons Australian International Motor Show Auction, held in Melbourne. Needless to say, it wasn't Jeff's first VW – he'd been tweaking Beetles since he was 18, and his daily driver is a Bay Window Single Cab, which doubles up as a mobile billboard for his 'Banana Boys' fruit and veg business. It was, however, to become his most treasured.

Rally good

For truly devoted car nuts, the temptation to expand your collection can be hard to resist, so when Jeff spotted the Ascort in the Shannons auction listing, his curiosity was piqued. And as the prospect of potentially owning the unusual, glass fibre-bodied, Porsche-powered rarity entered Jeff's psyche, the more life or death it became that he was the winning bidder. The urge to make the Ascort his became even more urgent when he made contact with the owner of a dilapidated example locally, which served to further capture Jeff's imagination. More importantly, it confirmed it would be the perfect car for him to campaign in the Adelaide Targa rallies, which for a long time he'd dreamed about entering.

With his interest duly registered, on the day of the sale Jeff anxiously picked up the 'phone and started bidding. The first piece of advice anyone with experience of auctions will give is to set a figure you are prepared to pay, and stick to it, but any such ideas of restraint went out of the window when the bidding started, and Jeff refused to stop until he'd outbid everyone else and secured it.

Having uncorked the champagne, presumably, he started doing a bit of digging to see if he could discover some of the Ascort's more recent past. It turns out the Australian-built coupé sat derelict in a Sydney garden in the 1980s, before being 'rescued' by a restorer full of good intentions, but again it sat unloved and incomplete for a while longer before being discovered by Sydney car enthusiast, Geoff Starkey.

Geoff undertook a ground-up restoration, sourcing the various missing parts from the remains of a second Ascort, which he'd found in New Zealand. While the cars were originally built with VW running gear and Okrasa engines, Geoff used the engine from a Porsche 356. He also fitted Porsche 356B brakes (an option from the factory, according to some sources), cut out the rear bumper, painted the dash the same colour as the body (instead of black) and made some other minor trim changes. This is how Jeff bought the car.

"unusual, glass fibre-bodied, Porsche-powered rarity"

Beauty on a budget

At this point, it's worth explaining a bit more about the Ascort and the ingenuity its creator, Mirek Craney, displayed in bringing it to production. That shallow, beautifully

Don't confuse this car with anything sporting a blue oval, although bizarrely there's a photo of the prototype with 'Escort' badging on the boot lid

Chrome Porsche 356 wheels feature on Jeff's car, with 356B finned drum brakes behind them. VW steel wheels with Porsche domed hubcaps and wheel trims were fitted as standard

Rear end features distinctive US-style rear fins and a sloping glass rear 'screen pirated from an Austin A95. Craney nabbed the windscreen from a Peugeot 403

Pencil thin rear lights are from a Humber Hawk MkVI

curved front windscreen, for example, came from a Peugeot 403, while the raked rear 'screen was originally an Austin A95 part. The door locks are VW, but the handles themselves are either Standard Vanguard or Morris Isis in origin. Meanwhile, the front and rear bonnet hinges were straight from the Ford Consul parts bin and get this, the fuel tanks, of which there are two, were nicked from the humble Ford 105E Anglia.

The pencil thin tail lights are from a Humber Hawk MkVI, the wipers are Jaguar MkVII (converted to 6V) and the rear view mirror and sun visor is Porsche 356.

And do you recognise those air vents on the horizontal panel just forward of the deck lid? Well, they're cut down Oval Window dash grilles.

The front seats are deserving of special mention, too. They're based on those from a Porsche 356A, but have the outer pivot mounted further forward so they fold diagonally towards the middle of the car to allow easier access to the rear seat.

Reality check

Back to the story. Jeff had his new acquisition trailered straight from the auction house to the garage of his friend and VW mechanic, Mark Poole. The aim was to have it set it up for track use, so new Koni shocks and Nolathane bushes were fitted underneath, while the 356 engine was swapped for a 2180cc VW unit with twin 48mm Dell'Ortos. Additional oil cooling was added before Jeff took it out on the track for its first proper outing, complete with orange racing stripes for a bit more visual drama and various little motorsport-inspired details such as a Monza-style fuel filler and bonnet pins to hold the engine lid down firmly.

It was good, but there was a fair amount of vibration in the 'shell and the rear suspension set up would need some work to really make the most of the engine. It was while he was contemplating what changes would have to

CLOSE, BUT NO CIGAR

Despite its unmistakable Italian influences, instead of coming out of Luigi Segre's sketchbook, the Ascort was designed by Mirek Craney – a native Czech who boarded a boat destined for Australia in the early 1950s.

A long-time car enthusiast, once down under Craney set up business importing plastic manufacturing machinery and VW engine conversion kits, with the aim of combining the two in order to realise his dream of designing and building his own sports car, based on the VW floorpan and running gear.

The company he set up to achieve this was Continental Coachworks, and Craney was a pioneer in the use of state-of-the-art glass fibre spraying technology, which offered a faster manufacturing rate and a high ratio of 'glass to resin. His design for the body proved to be very strong, but heavy – made worse by the use of steel in the windscreen frame and door pillars to enhance rigidity.

Craney's aim was to create something with the class and visual drama of a Karmann Ghia, but the equipment level of a Porsche 356. As such, it shares the KG's 2+2 seating layout, though with more legroom in the rear, while additional instrumentation and a Petri banjo steering wheel put it more on a par with a 356. To give the Porsches a run for their money on the road, he equipped his cars with 36bhp 1200cc VW engines fitted

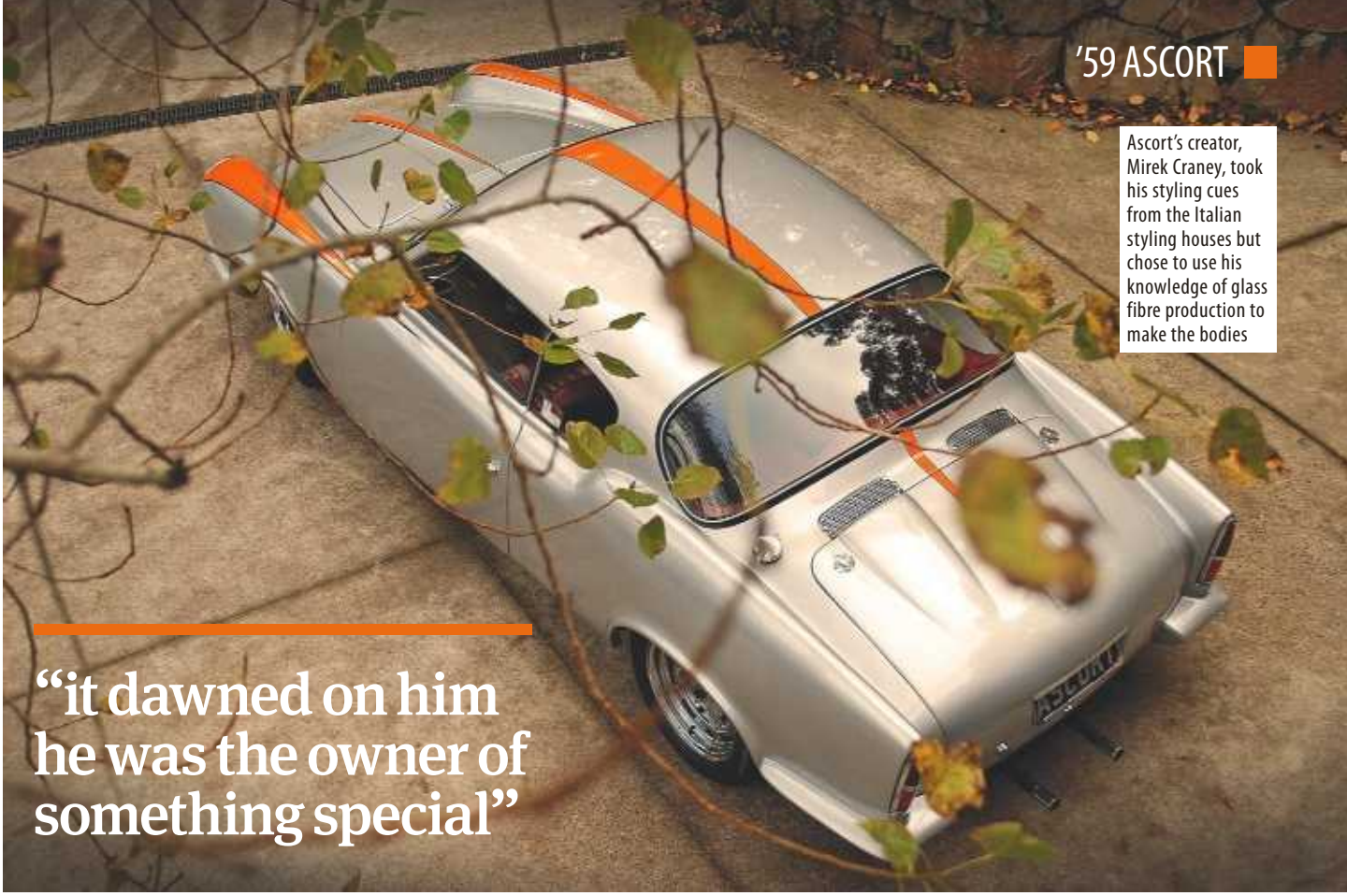
Craney posing with the 1958 prototype under Sydney Harbour Bridge

with full Okrasa TSV tuning kits that increased capacity to 1300cc and upped power to 54bhp, giving a theoretical top speed of 95mph.

MONEY PIT

Things were looking good, but developing the 1958 prototype had depleted Craney's limited resources and, had it not been for an article in *Modern Motor* magazine, which extolled the car's virtues, it could have all ended at the one car.

Other magazines picked up on the Ascort and, as a result, Continental Coachworks was offered a free display stand at the 1959 Melbourne Motor Show. As soon as people saw the car for



Ascort's creator, Mirek Craney, took his styling cues from the Italian styling houses but chose to use his knowledge of glass fibre production to make the bodies

"it dawned on him he was the owner of something special"

"the class and visual drama of the Karmann Ghia but the equipment levels of the Porsche 356"

l, interest grew, and with 57 post-show ers in the bag, the Ascort was put into oduction that year.

The biggest problem, however, was the ce. Selling for the equivalent of £2,250, it s £150 dearer than an Austin Healey 0/6 and not far shy of a contemporary rsche 356, which sold for £2,545 at the e. Production also required a lot of capital up front, which Craney didn't have, plus there were additional costs associated with testing and quality control.

Despite receiving over 50 orders, it's believed only 13 cars were finished before production came to a halt in 1961

Reportedly, that year he was approached by a big US manufacturer but, perhaps naively, thought he could weather the storm and turned the offer down. Soon after, in 1961, Continental Coachworks called it a day.

By then, 19 bodies had been produced. The first 13 were completed, and the remainder sold incomplete for customers to finish. His dream project cruelly terminated, Craney returned to his industrial production business and eventually died in 1982. ■

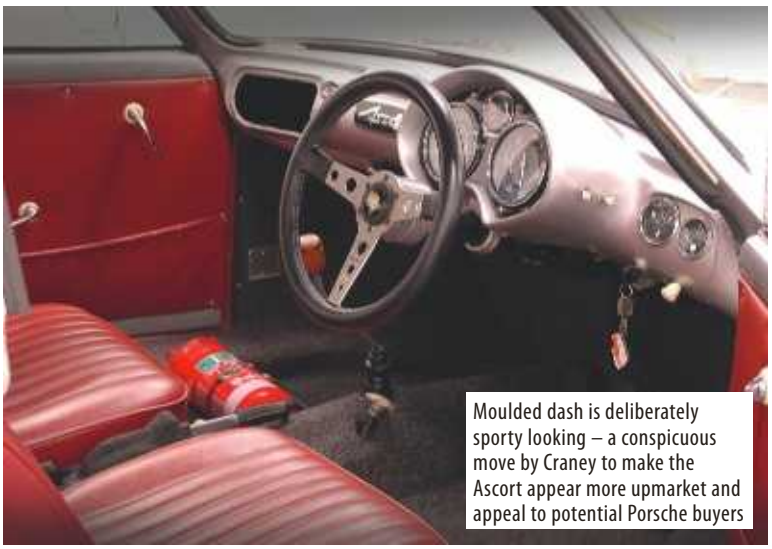
The Ascort was originally marketed as a more upmarket version of VW's Karmann Ghia

This period shot proves the Ascort's performance was adequate enough to get its owner's collar felt by traffic police

Craney's dream of building a successful glass fibre sports car was thwarted by lack of funding. Here he is working on the plaster mock up used to make the GRP moulds

All Ascorts would have had a full Okrasa breathed-on 1200cc VW engine bored out to 1300cc with twin carbs and twin-port heads, but Jeff's car now features a Porsche 356 unit built in the US by Duane Spencer

Jeff's Ascort dates from 1960. The serial number, 31, on the ID tag is puzzling because only 19 bodies were produced. Ditto the reference to Canberra, as all the cars were produced in the old tram depot at Tempe, Sydney



Moulded dash is deliberately sporty looking – a conspicuous move by Craney to make the Ascort appear more upmarket and appeal to potential Porsche buyers

Additional gauges sit to the right of the main pod, within easy view of the driver. Spot the Beetle headlight switch

Originally, a Continental Coachworks emblem would have been fitted here. The ashtray above comes from a 1950's Holden

be made to address these issues that it dawned on him he was the owner of something special – one of just 19 such cars built, of which 13 are still known to exist but most are off the road "awaiting restoration". Was it right to be racing one of the only roadworthy examples of this unusual car? With that moment of clarity, his motor racing aspirations with the car came to an abrupt halt.

Okay Okrasa

The decision was made to keep the car a road car, rather than a race car and to go back to a Porsche engine. Incidentally, as far as we can ascertain, Porsche engines were never offered as an option on the Ascort originally, all being fitted with Okrasa VW engines, hence the car's full name of Ascort TSV 1300. The TSV 1300 bit referring to the full blown Okrasa conversion, which included crank, pistons, heads, dual carbs and even a lightened flywheel. These engines were expensive when new, and are even more expensive and hard to find today.

As a result, Jeff decided to go the 356 engine route instead, commissioning renowned US 356 specialist, Duane Spencer, to build the unit for him. It uses a Scat crank, Porsche 912 con rods, some of his own design Shasta 86 mm x 10.5 compression pistons, a Norris cam, ported heads with sodium filled exhaust valves and twin 40mm Solex carbs.

"an intriguing blend of European styling and engineering with an Australian twist to the story"

As the car already had 356B brakes behind its chrome rims, these were retained. Inside, Jeff left things pretty much as the car was restored, though the original Petri steering wheel has been replaced by a Momo Prototipo and a couple of the gauges have been changed.

The Ascort may not be the most drop dead gorgeous of all the VW-based coachbuilts and production cars that have been built over the years, but it remains an intriguing blend of European styling and engineering with an Australian twist to the story. As far as remaining examples go, this one is the benchmark, so take it in and make up your own mind whether you think the Ascort should have been more of a success than it was. ■

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 # 62404

VW Thing wiper motor seal

If you plan to overhaul your VW Thing wiper motor, replace the seal. This part is for the VW Thing only.

 # 04974

Headlight unit mounting hardware

Stainless steel bolts were used by VW to secure the early type headlights with plastic spacers in between to protect the fenders, we also have the plastic spacers as reference # 04975.

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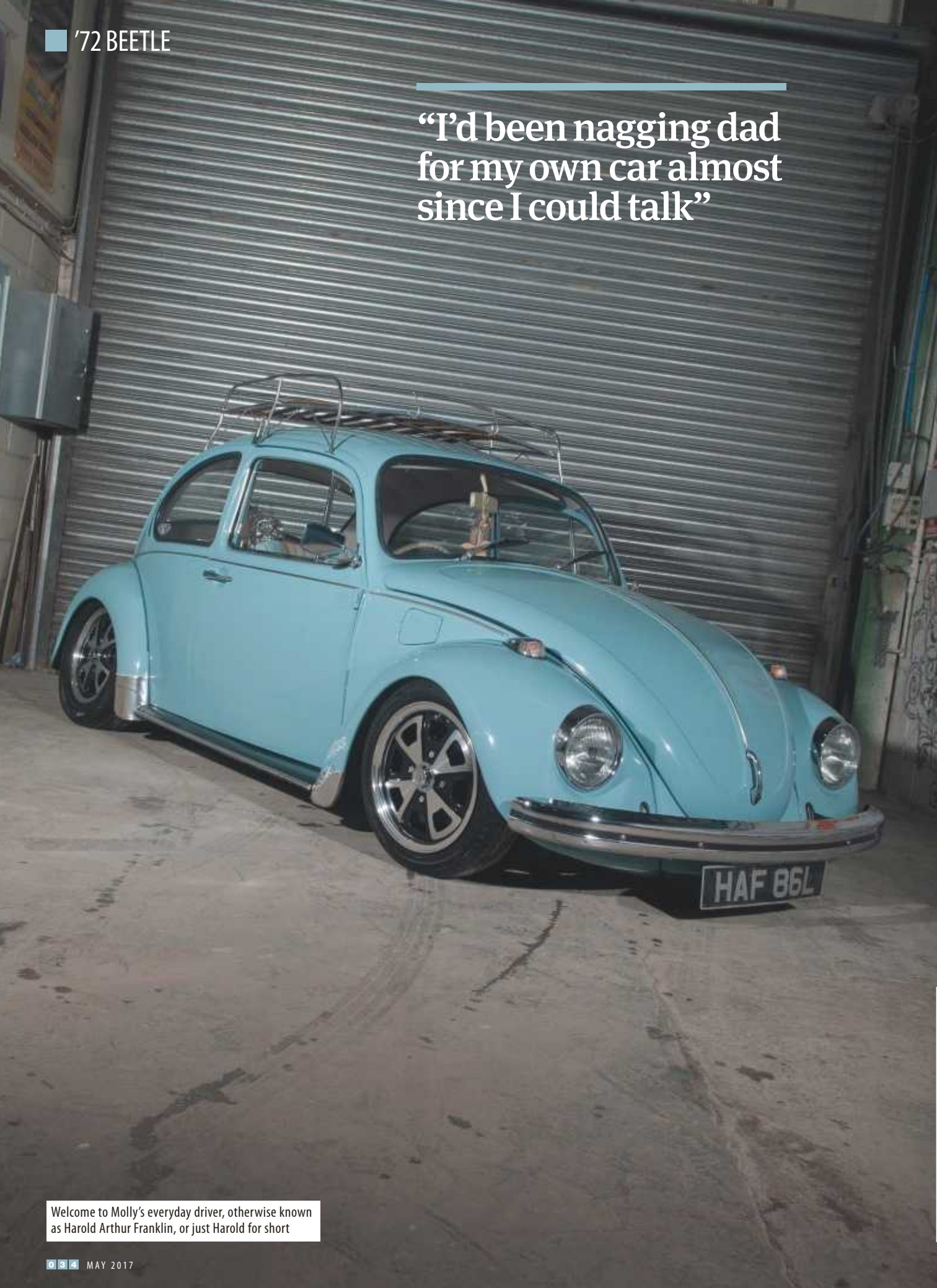
Taylor made

Imagine owning this 1972 Beetle as your first ever car. And the scenario for Molly Taylor is even sweeter as she helped make it look this good

Words and photos Simon Cooke

"I'd been nagging dad for my own car almost since I could talk"



Welcome to Molly's everyday driver, otherwise known as Harold Arthur Franklin, or just Harold for short

You think this is low for everyday driving? You should have seen it before it was raised up to be more practical. Molly had picked this colour for the car before she'd even laid eyes on the Beetle

Clearly, if your dad drives a seriously cool '66, 13-window Deluxe Microbus and owns Manflowers Restoration Company, there's just no way your first car is going to be a Ford Fiesta, or anything Japanese.

"Me and my brother, Ben, wanted a Beetle as our first car because we have only ever known VWs," says Molly Taylor aka Mooks, the daughter of Lee Taylor, the man behind Manflowers. So, being a devoted dad, that's exactly what he bought his two children five years ago through eBay, for £750.

"I'd been nagging dad for my own car almost since I could talk, and he eventually spotted this one for my brother – he's two years older than me – and me to share," continues Mooks. "It was all standard, except it didn't have the right bumpers, and my brother and I are quite pernickety about what a car should have. Cars not having the right period parts on them is a pet hate of ours."

It took a day's welding by dad to get the car through its MoT so it could be driven on the road by the youngsters. "I remember going down to the barn and seeing it for the first time. When we saw the number plate, we came up with the name Harold Arthur Franklin," laughs Mooks, "Harold for short, and it's just kind of stuck."

On the outside then it was a combination of dark blue, primer and rust. And the inside? "All the horsehair was coming through the seats, and we had to use a cushion to sit on

> This is how Harold looked when he was bought. Looks a little better now, huh?

> Having a dad who runs a VW resto company meant Molly had first-hand experience in the restoration, learning to weld at the age of 16. Molly spent hours prepping the car ready for its new colour

Harold was treated to a bare metal rub down and then a new coat of paint, inside and out

Getting there: just needs a few finishing touches now, including the headlights

TECH INFO

BODY
Stock 1972 1300 Beetle, repainted in custom mix Manflowers duck egg / heritage blue (VW Marina Blue to you and me); Heritage stainless roof rack

ENGINE
1641cc Type 1 engine; Auto Linea stock heads; Scat C35 cam; Mahle pistons and barrels; twin Weber 34ICT carbs; Pertronix ignitor; stock-style big bore exhaust; alternator conversion

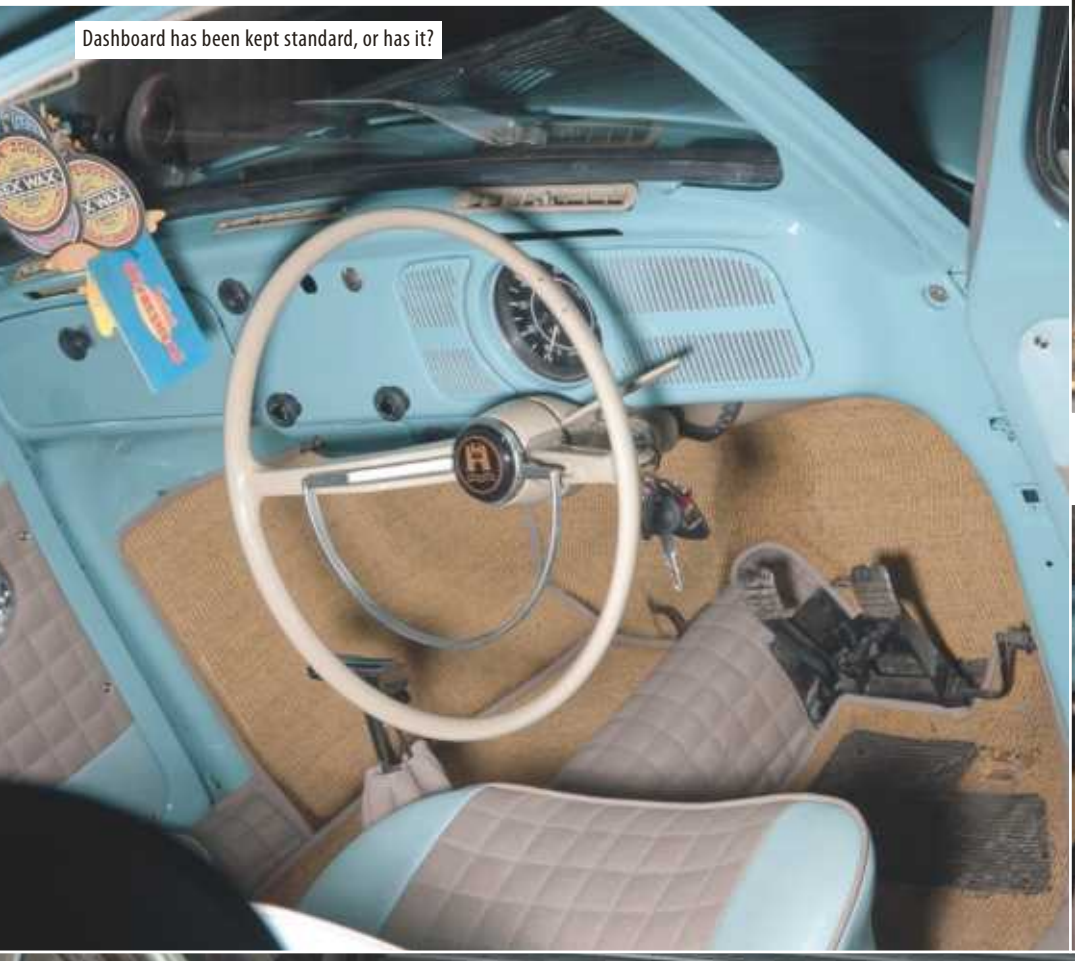
CHASSIS
Front disc brake conversion; adjustable balljoint beam; dropped spindles; short shocks all round; three-spline rear drop; notched spring plates

GEARBOX
Stock 4-speed; Scat shifter

WHEELS AND TYRES
Replica Porsche 914 2.0-litre alloys; Smart Car 145/65R15 front; 205/60-15 rear

INTERIOR
Original seats refurbished and re-trimmed in blue / grey material by Waboo Automotive; Sony bluetooth head unit; FLI 6in speakers

> Molly is delighted with the work the boys from Waboo Automotive carried out with the interior restoration



Dashboard has been kept standard, or has it?

> You'd be smiling too if this was your first ever car, and your daily driver

"It's okay, I know where all the local speed bumps are, and how to avoid them"

Check out the tyre-to-'arch clearance on those 15in Porsche replica rims

Molly's dad replaced the standard lump with this mild, twin-carbed 1641cc engine he built himself

Thankfully, Molly hasn't seen fit to change the tail lights and bumpers for earlier ones, she's a stickler for period correct parts you see

"I was 16 when [dad] started to teach me how to weld after school and at weekends"

or you would be covered in hair, but the seats were surprisingly comfortable," Mooks replies. "We always saw the Beetle as a joint project, and my brother drove it for a while until he knocked over a hedgehog because it was so low." Ben then took over a '59 Beetle, leaving Harold to Molly, who drove it in the state it was bought for quite some time until the alternator packed up at the start of last year and it came off the road for a serious overhaul.

After school club

"I remember starting to work on it with my dad. I was 16 when he started to teach me how to weld after school and at weekends," remembers Molly. And not just welding either, Molly has been involved with most parts of the car's restoration, and so knows first hand just how much work is involved.

"When we stripped it down, we wrapped all the original glass in bubble wrap while the work was being carried out. We had to replace the doors as there were no bottoms to them, so we got a set from eBay, only to then realise the driver's door was warped so we ended up welding Harold's original top to the bottom of the new one," Molly explains. The rest of the replacement panels came either from Just Kampers or VW Heritage, and there were plenty of them.

As you will have noticed, the car is sporting a new colour scheme these days, and Molly did much of the prep work prior to the colour change. It was painted in house at Manflowers in what Molly calls a one-off Manflowers duck egg / heritage blue, but which looks suspiciously like VW Marina Blue to us. Either way, Molly picked the colour when she was 15 and even has her own Snap-On tool chest painted to match!

"I wanted to keep the original seats because they were so comfortable, even if they were falling apart," says Molly, "and Tom

and Austin at Waboo Automotive in Hereford did a great job refurbishing them and restored them with new coverings."

With the outside in a shiny new coat of paint and a fresh interior, it would be a shame to keep the tired old 1300 engine, right? Dad agreed and decided this was a suitable time for an engine upgrade, so built Molly a 1641cc engine from scratch. Nice. "Dad built most of it and I just picked the shiny bits and pieces for it, but I did lend a hand when I could," admits Molly of this stage of the restoration. Of course, the Beetle has also been treated to new brakes and suspension, too.

Driven to tears

I should mention at this point that halfway through the restoration, dad reversed a Camper into the front wing of the Beetle while it was parked outside the workshop – Molly says she was in tears, but it all got sorted in the end.

Molly's first drive in the 'all-new' Beetle was at the start of 2017. "I drove it down to the garage to get some petrol, and straight away realised that having it only an inch off the ground was going to be a problem. It even ground out while driving it out of the workshop!" remembers Molly with a grin. So it was straight back into the workshop after that little trip for dad – with Molly's help of course – to raise it up a little at the front. If Molly's honest, it's still too low – especially as she uses it as her daily driver –and it has been known for her and passengers (usually her long-suffering boyfriend) to get out and push when it grounds out. "It's okay, I know where all the local speed bumps are, and how to avoid them," she reveals. "There's one large one in the middle of town and I have to drive the long way out to the ring road to avoid it!"

As Harold is used as a daily driver for work, and for trips to the beach to go surfing at weekends, Molly always carries a tool kit and spares, confident she has the kit and mechanical skills to get her up and running again should the worst happen. If not, dad's always on the end of a 'phone.

You might think any teenager would be happy with a cool Beetle like this, and Molly definitely is, but she admits she also fancies a Bay, which would make life a lot easier on those surfing trips.

It's been a steep learning curve to get the Beetle to this condition, but it's one that Molly says she has thoroughly enjoyed, though we suspect there were times when it was painful, as her top tip for anybody about to start a similar project suggests: "Don't weld in a bikini!" Wise words, we'll definitely take note. ■

"Molly always carries a tool kit and spares, confident she has the kit and mechanical skills to get her up and running again should the worst happen"

^ Forget matching handbag and shoes, this year's must have is a colour coded Snap-On tool chest

Thanks
My parents and all the Manflowers Resto crew, Tom and Austin at Waboo Automotive, my boyfriend, Luke, and Oliver

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LAX 268D

Like father, like son (in law)

Most fathers are suspicious of their daughter's boyfriend, but Kevin Burns decided to involve his in his hobby, and this sweet '66 Split is the result

Word and photos Jon Cass

’66 SPLIT BUS

Sometimes, owning an air-cooled VW can seem like there’s no time to do much else. In our busy lives, even just driving, maintaining and attending shows in classic VWs can take up all available spare time, yet there are some folk who somehow find they’re able to commit to a second major hobby, too.

For Kevin Burns, that other passion is restoring old scooters such as Vespas and Lambrettas, those of the design that look just as cool stood still as they do on the move. It helps that Kevin works as a motorcycle technician, yet somehow he managed to find the time to restore and modify this ’66 Split to a standard on a par with any of his ‘smaller’ restorations, and with help from his daughter’s boyfriend, Sam.

“I’ve always been a lover of VWs in general, and had a few as daily drivers, but then I was introduced to the classic side by my mate, Andy Dutton,” Kevin remembers. “He owned a lovely Beetle and

< Cab area is very plush, with plenty of chrome and the seats re-trimmed in the same brown leather and biscuit tweed.

> Lovely original Petri banjo steering wheel was originally fitted in a Tatra

^ 12in Vibe subwoofer sits in the back inside an unassuming period suitcase

< Wraparound seating in brown leather and biscuit tweed is a nice place to be. Table and cushions look good, too!

TECH INFO

BODY
1966 11-window, repainted in Old English White and green; US-spec bumpers and lights; deluxe trim; polished safaris, pop-outs and cab door tops; front-mount aerial; washer jets moved above safaris; light smoke tinted glass; front 'arches tubbed

INTERIOR
Front bench seat; ¾-width rock 'n' roll bed; wraparound seating; re-trimmed in brown leather and biscuit tweed; lightweight MFC zebra limed oak units; 32in TV on electric lift; diesel night heater; leisure battery; air tank and compressor under rear seat; LED lighting in the roof and around the floor; removable table; Madmatz wicker cab carpet; EMPI gear lever; Smiths dials; 1950's Tatra steering wheel; JVC double din head unit in custom overhead console; JVC component speakers; 12in vibe sub

"I thought having 21 windows would be a pain to cover while camping, and a sunroof in Britain would be useless"

^ An original Blaupunkt radio sits where it should in the dash, but there's a thoroughly modern head unit elsewhere for when Kev's in the mood for music

< And here is that double din head unit, neatly integrated into the overhead console. The control unit for the air ride is positioned here, too

a fantastic Bay Window, both of which I was really impressed by."

Fast forward a few years and Kevin's daughter, Hannah, met Sam Peace, who would become her new boyfriend. Not only was Sam a decent all-round bloke, he was also impressed and inspired by the restoration work Kevin was carrying out on his classic scooters. "He was keen to become involved himself, and together we restored a Lambretta GP150," Kevin recalls, "Sam was just 16 at the time and, as soon as he'd passed his test, he bought a Mk4 Golf." Okay, there's nothing special about that you might think, but his passion for the badge on the Mk4's bonnet would soon lead on to more exciting projects. "Sam started looking out for a classic VW, and decided to buy a Mk1 Caddy," Kevin continues. "Again, we restored that together, and I loved every minute of it. By the time we'd completed it, we were already on the lookout for our follow-up project."

The third joint venture would turn out to be more ambitious, and on a larger scale, than the Caddy or Lambretta, as the pair decided to tackle a VW Camper, both adamant it had to be of the Split Screen variety.

Ripe for restoration

Taking on a ground-up restoration of VW's iconic Bus is no mean feat, as anyone who's been involved in such a project will testify, and the duo were under no illusion that this

^ 15 x 5.5in Radar alloys were the first purchase for the rebuild and the Bus was pretty much built up around them

^ Washer jets have been neatly re-located to above the safari windows so you don't accidentally get an eyeful of water when they're open

v Small LED indicators mounted under the rear panel mean the Bus can retain its all-red, US-spec tail lights and still be UK legal

was going to be a cheap or easy project. Undeterred, the search was on to find a suitable candidate, and a good place to start was well known Derbyshire-based Bus specialist, AH Schofield (www.alanhschofield.com), who had a number of Splits in stock, and a few more due in imminently, all ripe for restoration.

"We originally went to see a 21-window, which would have been a big job as it needed a roof section, among other things," Kevin tells us. "I also thought having 21 windows would be a pain to cover while camping, and a sunroof in Britain would be useless. In hindsight, I regret letting that one pass by!" During conversation that day, mention was made of another, perhaps more suitable, Bus that at the time was on its way to the UK. This one being an 11-window '66. Kevin registered his interest and, when it arrived, drove over to have a look.

Texas turkey

"When it arrived, it was in a terrible state," he remembers. "It had come from a poultry farm in Texas, and I can only assume it had been parked underneath a leaking gutter as the a-post on one side had almost completely rotted away." The floors were also rusty, the front panel was both rotten and stoved in while, as is typical with neglected Transporters, the bottom six to eight inches were crumbling away into dust. But that wasn't all. "The rear corners were poor too, both heavily dented, and it looked like an elephant had sat on the roof!" Kevin laughs.

Before any welding or fabrication work could begin, the pair had the unenviable task of removing a large quantity of chicken excrement from the interior. "It must have been used as a chicken coop for its last few years in Texas."

One of the hardest aspects of the whole project for Kevin was media blasting the 'shell. "I bought a pot blaster and had a go myself, but what a nightmare

> A potent, air-cooled VW motor producing 120bhp would have cost big money, so instead there's a normally aspirated, 2.0-litre Subaru flat four

TECH INFO

GEARBOX
Taken from a Karmann Ghia 1500 with a TSR Performance adapter plate and RJ Engineered Solutions (www.rjes.com) flywheel

ENGINE
Stock 2.0-litre, naturally-aspirated Subaru flat four; K&N cone filter; blue silicone hoses; Fellows Speed Shop radiator located under chassis; TSR Performance exhaust

CHASSIS
Creative Engineering (CE) front and rear air ride system with AccuAir e-Level management; dropped spindles; CE IRS conversion; CE steering rack; CSP front disc brake conversion; Late Bay rear drums; dual circuit master cylinder with remote servo

WHEELS AND TYRES
15 x 5.5in Radars; 165/50-15 and 195/50-15 Bridgestone Potenzas

that was," he remembers. Once the necessary repairs had been done, it was time to sort out the suspension modifications. Rather than just settle for a static drop, Kevin opted for a front and rear Creative Engineering air ride system, controlled by AccuAir e-Level management. Road manners have been improved too, thanks to the IRS system at the rear in place of the traditional swing axle. The original steering box has also been replaced by a Creative Engineering steering rack and stopping power has been vastly improved thanks to a CSP disc brake conversion up front, and larger Late Bay rear drums, all worked by a dual circuit master cylinder with a remote servo.

"improved fuel economy, reliability, fuel injection and, most importantly, more power"

Kevin and Sam had planned all along to fit larger than standard rims to better fill out the 'arches and there was some discussion between the two about how much bigger they should go. "Sam was after 17s, but we ended up settling for a set of 15 x 5.5in polished Radars," says Kevin with a smile. "Actually, they were our first purchase for the project, and the Bus has been pretty much built up around them." The front 'arches were tubbed due to the extreme lowering, which is effected by the use of dropped spindles at the front, while the chassis has also been notched for tie rod clearance.

Silly money

When it came to engine options, the Bus was basically a blank canvas. "We wanted more power than standard and began looking at air-cooled options but, to gain over 110bhp, you were talking silly money. In the end, we opted for a water-cooled, 2.0-litre Subaru flat four, which came stock with 120bhp." Okay, this conversion might not keep the purists happy, but it's now a tried and tested route to take and, as far as Kevin was concerned, it ticked all the boxes – improved fuel economy, reliability, fuel injection and, most importantly, more power. Having wired up the original Subaru ECU, sorted out a fuel injection system using an external fuel pump with custom made fuel lines, purchased a Butty's Bits mid mount that holds the engine as well as the gearbox and fitted a custom exhaust system from TSR Performance, the Subaru engine fitted in without too much messing.

"It's a reasonably straightforward swap," confirms Kevin. Okay, so he's being a bit blasé there about the work involved as, while the Japanese flat four may fit in the hole, it's not exactly a simple nut and bolt job. Amongst the other items that needed buying were a set of Leyland silicone hoses, a K&N filter and, naturally, a radiator, which came from Fellows Speedshop and is located under the chassis.

"We had the Bus built up to an almost driveable state, just to ensure everything would fit," Kevin remembers, "then we disassembled it all so the 'shell could be sent away for paint." At least knowing the trial fit had worked, this meant the second build was relatively straightforward in comparison. The bare 'shell was sent to Phil Greenwood in Eccleston for its new coat of Old English White and a shade of green chosen from the thousands of available colour samples. Unusually, the white sections appear on the lower flanks instead of the upper half, but the overall look works perfectly, especially now those shiny rims are involved.

Definite deadline

"Once it came back from paint, we began the re-fit, which seemed to take an age," Kevin points out. This wasn't helped by the lads only having Saturdays available to work on the Bus. All too soon they realised a year had passed. Then, in early 2016, they sent off an application for a spot at The *VolksWorld* Show and were accepted, which gave them a definite deadline to work toward. "It was still a mile off being finished when we got our letter confirming we'd been accepted for the show, so we ended up taking a week off work and spending all our spare time getting it done.

"Sometimes we felt like we were making no

"I think we went a little further than planned"

progress, and even the smallest of jobs could end up taking a whole day, but we got there in the end."

As the chromework and trim was past saving when the Bus arrived, once again all options were available when it came to completing the exterior look. Colour-coded, US-spec bumpers, deluxe trim, polished safari windows and chromed cab door tops help transform the '66, while a few trick details such as the centre-mount aerial in the nose badge, the washer jets located above the safaris and light smoked glass all round confirm this is one well thought out Split.

That just left the interior to sort, and there was to be no cutting corners here either. The front bench seat and wrap around seating have been treated to brown leather, combined with biscuit tweed, which all looks extremely inviting. The upholstery work was assigned to Carl Darbyshire at Nikira Upholstery Ltd. who carried out a fantastic job. The ¾-width rock 'n' roll bed has been trimmed to match, while the dark wooden floor and lightweight MFC zebra limed oak cupboards are nothing short of class. It doesn't just look the part either, it's been built to be practical too, with a diesel night heater, leisure battery and removable table all contained inside, too. Mood lighting comes from LED lights situated in the roof and around the floor and, if the weather isn't especially favourable, that 32in TV positioned on an electric lift just behind the cab could come in useful.

The period suitcase contains a sub woofer, which works with a very capable sound system, while the tank and compressor for the air suspension have been hidden under the rear seats.

The Split's cab area now benefits from an EMPI gear lever, a Madmatz wicker carpet and a steering wheel from a 1950's Tatra, found by Kevin at the 2013 *VolksWorld* show, in case you were wondering! The Smiths speedo, clock and temperature gauges finish it all off nicely.

Sam *(left)* and Kev, both quite rightly proud of what they've achieved

Outta time

"In the end, we just ran out of time in the run up to the show," explains Kevin, "but we weren't about to let the show down so, even though it was completed and driving, it wasn't yet registered so we had to take it there on a trailer. The following week, though, it was MoT'd and the log book applied for."

As you'd expect, Kevin and Sam's Split when down a storm at all the shows it attended last summer and the pair were overwhelmed by compliments on their work. "We always intended the Bus to be modified," Kevin smiles, "but, like a lot of my scooters, it had to look like a classic but have a modern day engine, disc brakes and electrics. I think we went a little further than planned on the modifications, and I think Sam is to blame on that score, but I wouldn't change anything about it now."

Although Sam and Kevin thoroughly enjoyed working together on this project, they admit they're not keen to do it all again: "I think our next project will be something smaller," Kevin laughs. "When we first took this on, we could never understand why some people took so long to finish VW projects, but now we know!" ■

Thanks
Creative Engineering, Phil Greenwood for the paint, F&M Powder Coating Preston, Dave the electrician, Carl Darbyshire at Nikira Upholstery Ltd. and to Julie and Hannah for putting up with us being in the garage every weekend.

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Under the influence

A chance conversation with his brother in law led to Steve Coughlan searching for a running, driving, 'easy' Beetle project. What he ended up buying was neither running, driving, nor an easy project…

Words Mark Walker **Photos** Lyndon McNeil

Steve stands proudly with the finished car. Four-inch narrowed beam and air ride make a huge difference to the stance, especially in comparison with the pictures of the car as he bought it on the next spread

"Martin suggested the pair rebuild the engine in Steve's 6' x 5' garden shed"

Martin was the aforementioned brother in law, who has to take the blame, for it was he who had owned a Beetle before, and suggested on that cold night under canvas at a car show in 2012 that they were "easy to restore." With Steve having spent a fair portion of his life in the army, and therefore not in a position to take on a restoration project, when he was released from duty he was itching to get something underway.

By February 2013, after scouring eBay for a few months, he found himself heading to Weston-super-Mare – with Martin in tow for advice – to view the 1967 Beetle you see in the pictures. Now, as many of you will know, 1967 Beetles are a bit of an anomaly. Despite just qualifying as 'early', due to the presence of sloping headlamps and a long bonnet, they have many later-style features, such as narrow side trim, a shorter engine lid and squishy black dash knobs, but what mattered for Steve was the condition of the body, and that's where this car shone. Despite clearly needing a repaint and not having a running engine, it was solid in all the right areas, so the car was loaded on a trailer and dragged home to London.

Recurring theme

As he couldn't weld, Steve had done well purchasing a car with solid floors, heater channels (they'd been replaced previously, but done to a decent standard) and all the other common rot areas, so he immediately began to strip it down for a repaint. After a month of working weekends on the car, he had a bare rolling 'shell with an engine in front of him and was surrounded by boxes of parts. Steve: "At this point, my wife, Sharon, needed reassurance that it looked worse than it was, so I found myself telling her it wouldn't cost a lot to put back together." This became a recurring theme throughout the project. Not lying exactly, just, ahem, rounding the cost of things down, rather than up, when giving progress reports.

TECH INFO

BODY
Stock 1967 RHD European-spec Beetle; repainted in L620 Savannah Beige

INTERIOR
New caramel seat covers and side panels, square weave carpets and original style off-white headlining, all from Newton Commercial

ENGINE
1641cc engine with new tinware; 009 distributor; dress-up kit and stock exhaust

SUSPENSION
Limebug Deluxe air ride kit: 4-inch narrowed Jawbreaker beam, Viair compressor and air tank under bonnet

WHEELS AND TYRES
EMPI-style replica 8 spokes; 165/65-15s front and 185/65-15s rear

When Martin suggested the pair rebuild the engine in Steve's 6' x 5' garden shed, it seemed like another great way to keep costs down. "We thought we could get away with leaving the bottom end and just doing a top end rebuild," recalls Steve. "We later found out this was a big mistake." Whilst the engine was being refurbished, the decision was made to convert to 12V electrics, so a lot of the parts needed were sourced from MegaBug, who were just down the road from where Steve was living at the time. Various other new parts were amassed, including a starter motor and a full set of engine tinware. This often seems like a great idea, until you realise that nothing fits quite as well as original German tinware.

With the motor screwed back together and looking great, the pair found a Bus gearbox bellhousing to bolt it to, so they could run it up before re-fitting it in the Beetle. To their delight, it started, but the joy was short lived, as the 31 PICT carburettor was found to be over fuelling. No biggie, a second trip to MegaBug sorted that.

Suffolk punch

Steve then moved to Sudbury in Suffolk, which meant he now had a larger single garage to work on the car in. His garage in London had been so small he'd had to roll the car out in order to work on it. This meant he could start rubbing the car down prior to having it painted. Steve: "I thought it would simply be a case of sanding back the rust blister on

^ You really can't beat a picture of a new project on a trailer. The anticipation is almost better than the real thing

v With a tiny single car garage, initial progress was slow. Note: alloy wheels and low profile tyres with stock suspension is not a good look

> The distinctive one-year-only engine lid is what makes a '67 Bug so easily identifiable

^ A new house and a larger garage helped push the project forwards. You can just see the laboriously hand sanded bare metal roof in this picture

v Unfortunately, the top end rebuild done on the engine that came with the car only lasted a few miles before a main bearing let go. The car now has a new 1641cc motor in place

"At this point, my wife needed reassurance that it looked worse than it was"

^ It was a bit scabby in places on the outside, but was rock solid in places that are usually rusty like the inner wings, body mounts and rear bumper mounts. You can just see the poorly repaired rear quarter panel in this picture

^ Steve bought wisely and started out with a really solid car, only uncovering one previous bodge and poor repair. The paint shows it has had work done in the past, but it was done well

^ My fingers and joints literally hurt at the sight of this picture, but once Steve had started bare metalling the car, he found he couldn't stop

^ Buffers might spot the later-style replacement heater channels, but the work was good and, more importantly, Steve didn't have to do it. The original floorpans are in great shape

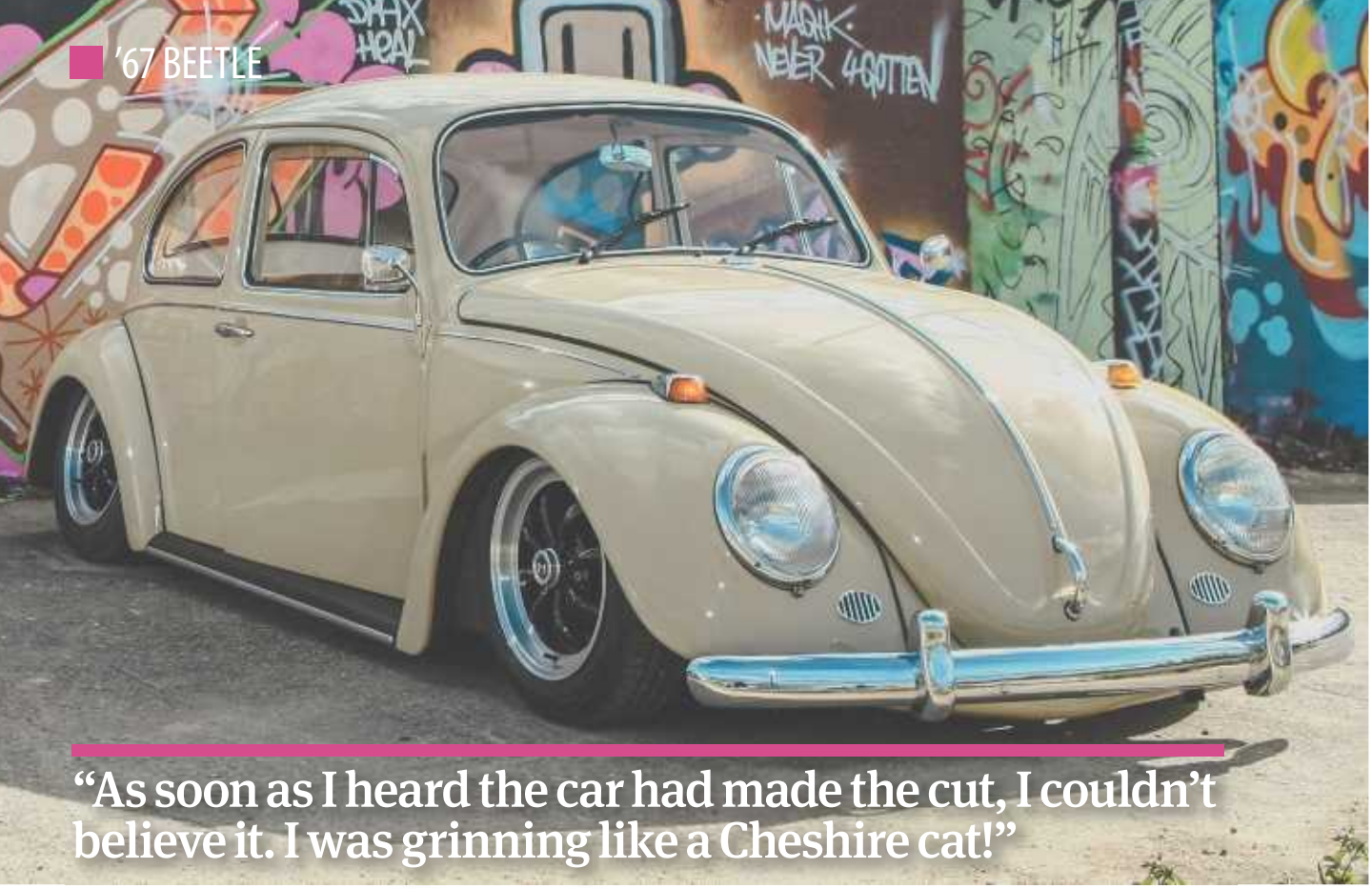
"I thought it would simply be a case of sanding back the rust blister on the roof, and maybe a couple of other spots..."

the roof, and maybe a couple of other spots…" It took an age to do even just that by hand, and before long his hands were red raw. But, with the roof now in shiny bare metal, it was like an itch he couldn't stop scratching, and he decided to bare metal a bit more, then a bit more. At this point Martin stepped up once again, offering the use of his compressor. Steve bought a random orbit air-powered sander and set to work. The only problem being the compressor had a really small tank and would work for five minutes, then take 10 minutes to refill. This meant that he still did more hand sanding than with power tools.

The big surprise came when he found an inch of filler on the driver's side rear quarter panel, which had been applied to cover a rust hole. He borrowed Martin's welder and had a go himself, but soon realised that the job was bigger than he first thought, so found a local welder on recommendation to repair the lower rear quarter panel, the spare wheel well and one door skin.

^ With the car back from paint, Steve could steam into the rebuild in earnest. Note the car still has its original front beam fitted at this point

< Steve used a Newton Commercial kit and tackled the interior himself, reporting: "The carpets went in okay, but the headliner was a nightmare. Many curse words were used."



"As soon as I heard the car had made the cut, I couldn't believe it. I was grinning like a Cheshire cat!"

The Limebug kit is a true bolt-in affair, which means any car fitted with it can be returned to stock really easily. In the meantime, Steve has fully adjustable suspension, so you could argue he has the best of both worlds. The colour choice of L620 Savannah Beige fits this car so well and means it looks pretty original, too

The good news at least was that with the whole car now in bare metal, there were no other nasty surprises, so it could go off to be painted in VW L620 Savannah Beige, which is correct for a 1967 car. It was painted in two pack paint inside and out, with several coats of lacquer, for an amazing shine. "It felt like it took an eternity to come back from the painter," remembers Steve, "but it gave me time to go through all the boxes and clean, repaint or refurbish all the rest of the parts, whilst at the same time ordering parts for anything that was either 6V, or beyond repair."

Rookie mistake

Steve laughs when he explains how he enthusiastically cleaned up a lot of the original 6V parts, before realising they couldn't in fact be used on a 12V car. A rookie mistake perhaps, but a chance to hone his restoration skills in the process, and sell some parts to recoup costs. All the rest of the 12V parts needed were sourced used, rather than new, so they all needed cleaning up, too. You might think this false economy, but it was Martin who advised him to try and use original German parts where possible, rather than putting his trust in new reproduction parts. Sound advice if you ask me.

This approach to the work schedule was great as, by the time all the necessary parts been sourced, the car came back from the paint shop. Steve: "Wow! It looked amazing. Problem was I was now too scared to touch it!" That feeling didn't last long though, as the urge to complete the job soon took over.

Steve decided to order a complete interior kit from Newton Commercial (www.newtoncommercial.co.uk) and, while he was waiting for his order

The results of all the meticulous prep work are plain to see. Air ride install is very clean, although I'm sure getting to the wiring can be a pain

Although this amount of camber looks cool, it does fulcrum plates, bearings and tyres no good whatsoever. Having air suspension means you can drop it like this when parked, but drive it at a more sensible ride height

^ Newton Commercial interior is subtly modified over stock, and we'd say your handbrake lever looks a little too happy here Steve!

v Despite the custom touches, the car has a 'stock-ish' look and all the elements fit together really well. Dual carbs are on the list of future improvements though

^ Pressure gauges for the air ride system hide away neatly in the glove box. With the air tank also hidden under the bonnet, from the outside you'd never know

< Steve chose to stick with the '64-on wing-top indicators and original pear-shaped hinge mirror. Detail is great throughout

v Slammed at the flick of a switch has its advantages. Though pumping back up isn't instantaneous, it takes the stress out of going over speed bumps, too

to show up, got busy covering the interior with Eastwood self-adhesive, foil-backed sound deadening, which he recalls being pretty sharp to use, resulting in a lot of plasters.

A new wiring loom was made for the car next, including converting from an eight-pole fuse box to a 12-pole one so there would be a couple of spare accessory circuits. This would come in handy later for the air ride.

Disaster strikes

Steve could now see light at the end of the tunnel, which he admits until then had been difficult. The first test drive, however, resulted in disaster, when the engine ate a main bearing, scrapping the case in the process. Steve promptly left it all behind him and went on holiday, leaving instructions with a local engine builder to build a fresh 1641cc motor, which he could fit on his return.

With this done, it was MoT time, which Steve says he was very nervous about. He had no need to be, as it turned out, as the car passed without any advisories. With that huge mental hurdle out of the way, Steve applied to have the car displayed at The *VolksWorld* Show and was successful. "As soon as I heard the car had made the cut, I couldn't believe it. I was grinning like a Cheshire cat!"

Since then, Steve has made some more changes, mainly to refine the car to his evolving tastes. The gearbox has been converted to short axles, in readiness for a set of banded steel rear wheels, which will replace the old EMPI-style 8 spokes. The bigger change is the fitment of a Limebug air ride kit, including one of the company's four-inch narrowed 'Jawbreaker' front beams.

Steve is the first to admit that, while the car is essentially finished, there will always be things he wants to change, or improve upon, especially as this was his first car build. Further upgrades he has planned include a longer legged gearbox and some 36 DRLA Dell'Orto carbs, in order to get the most out of the 1641cc engine. ■

Thanks:
I must give a massive thank you to Martin for all the help and advice, without which the project just wouldn't have been possible. I also need to give just as much praise and thanks to my lovely wife, Sharon, who remained patient and supportive throughout and is now expecting our first child.

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Bay to '89

With her partner running the Back to '89 forum, it's no surprise some of that influence has rubbed off on Heather Laskey's Early Bay

Words and photos Paul Bussey

Heather Laskey was fortunate to purchase her 1971 Bay Window not too far from her home in October 2011. With her partner, Stu, 'Ooh' to his friends, Betty, they looked at a number of other Bays, but this one proved to be the best all-round example. It didn't require any major body restoration – or so they thought – and the Danbury interior was complete, if not in a perfect state of preservation. Indeed, for the first two years, Heather and Stu drove the wheels off the Bay, attending a huge number of Volkswagen shows in it until October 2013, at which point Heather deemed it time to commence the restoration and rebuild she'd been planning all that time. The Bay was driven into the garage where it remained for the next 21 months.

The bodywork had succumbed to corrosion in the usual bottom six inches, so repairs were centred around the cab floor, wheelarches, sills and rear hatch, with new panels also required in one of the rear top corners, using a section from another Bay. The restoration timeline was to ensure the Bay would be ready to attend the 2015 *VolksWorld* Show at Sandown Park. The garage entrusted to carry out the work stripped the Bus to its bare 'shell and sent it away to be sandblasted to see what work they had to do for the welding and in readiness for re-painting. This was completed in Porsche 911 yellow (Hellgelb to give it its German name) and Volkswagen Ivory White, with components painted in Porsche Signal Red, which are all lovely vibrant colours. "Stu had

"Heather built up a scrapbook of pictures, gleaned from various magazines, which provided inspiration"

^ It has been a long, hard struggle for Heather to get her Bus finished, but it was so worth it!

much input when it came to colour coding the underneath and the running gear, as he had definite ideas on how it should look," enthuses Heather. "He runs Back to '89, a forum that specialises in tracing old VW show cars, and wanted to bring back the finer detailing of those '89 show cars."

Paris in summer

Heather decided to discard the original Danbury pop-top as it was too high to get the Bus in her garage at home. Instead, she opted for a Paris Beetles full-length ragtop, which she says is ideal for those summer camping weekends and holidays, as when folded back it allows a huge amount of light to flood into the interior.

A great deal of thought was given to how every area of the Bay was to be finished, and Heather built up a scrapbook of pictures, gleaned from various magazines, which provided inspiration. "I was hoping to retain as many of the original Danbury base units as possible but, as some of them had been painted in the past, in reality this didn't prove practical," explains Heather. "So a local company was entrusted to make a complete new set of units that were very much based on the original Danbury layout, with the addition of a Rusty Lee rock 'n' roll bed. The original sink was cracked and so was not re-used, the space being used for extra storage instead. Indeed, the new interior was fitted out very much with storage in mind."

The Bay has been re-trimmed to a very high specification, with a tuck 'n' roll design, using

^ Open air camping, courtesy of a Paris Beetles rag top conversion

Futura Leathers Birch Scarlet material that gives an opulent finish. Mad Matz provided the new carpets, which are in Amber Malay weave and give a nice light and airy feel.

A dash of detail

Feeling a stock Bay dashboard, even in mint condition, is pretty uninspiring, Heather decided to take her Bay's dash to another level. While the original black padding has been retained, the whole dashboard now sports a smooth white metal finish and incorporates a specially made, lockable, Beetle-style glove box lid. The stock Bay Window gauges have been re-faced in the style of Porsche 356 gauges by Reap Automotive Design (www.reapautomotivedesign.com), while the twin under-dash parcel shelves are bespoke and have been trimmed in red leather. The Flat4 Banjo steering wheel has a delightful sun and moon horn push, that's been custom painted in matching red as a one-off touch. One area that is often overlooked during a restoration is repainting the steering column and attachment bracket, but not on this Bay. The whole Bus is, in fact, an excellent example of colour co-ordination personified. The devil is in the detail.

To the rear of the interior, protective wooden slats have been fitted on top of the engine cover so the white paintwork below doesn't get scratched.

"When I bought the Bay in 2011, the 1600cc engine ran well enough, but it didn't seem to be very powerful and I was slowing down when ascending hills at 40mph," remembers Heather. "So I had the engine upgraded to 1641cc by the garage

^ Stock Bay Window dashboards are pretty Spartan, to say the least, but Heather has transformed hers to a whole new level

> Further attention to detail includes having the base of the sun and moon horn push colour coded

entrusted to complete the rest of the work on the Bus. Unfortunately, they fell behind schedule and, after various other issues, it was decided to take the Bus away unfinished. So, in mid-July 2015, it was collected by low loader and taken back to my house.

"It soon became clear all was not right with it – I wasn't able to get it into gear, and the engine was totally underpowered. There were many other issues,

TECH INFO

ENGINE
Harry Harpics-built 1641cc with twin 34ICT Webers and Vintage Speed exhaust; colour coded detail; Fireboy plumbed-in fire extinguisher system

CHASSIS
Stock beam with adjusters welded in; mild drop all round; stock disc / drums with servo upgrade; stock gearbox, rebuilt by Cog Box

WHEELS AND TYRES
15 x 4.5 and 15 x 5.5 Porsche 356-style steel wheels; 165/65 and 185/65 Michelin Energy Saver tyres; KdF-style hubcaps, chromed

TECH INFO

BODY

1970 Early Bay Window (first registered 1971); repainted Porsche Hellgelb, Volkswagen Ivory White and Porsche Signal Red; full colour coding, including underneath and engine bay; Paris Beetles full-length rag top; rear safari window

INTERIOR

One-off custom wooden interior based on original Danbury design but without sink and with additional storage; original pull-up stove; JMT leather interior; Formica worktops; Rusty Lee rock 'n' roll bed; Propex heater; custom dashboard and parcel shelf; Flat4 Banjo steering wheel with custom painted sun and moon horn push; Porsche 356-style gauge faces; LED colour change lighting; JBL four-channel amp and 6 x 9 speakers; RetroSound bluetooth radio

Beautifully colour coded and detailed engine and bay, complete with that all important Fireboy fire extinguisher system, paradoxically something you hope you never use!

"The rear of the Bus went up in flames with an engine fire!"

The devil is in the detail. 15-inch Porsche 356 rims painted Porsche Signal Red, chromed KdF-style hubcaps and whitewall flaps

but I do not wish to dwell upon them here."

Fire in the hole

The Bus was then taken to a local garage where the gear trouble was identified as a crushed selector rod. That fixed, the garage were working on an issue with the fuel gauge when disaster struck. The rear of the Bus went up in flames with an engine fire! While it caused some damage, the fire was brought under control in the nick of time, otherwise it would have meant a most ignominious end to the Bus. "The Bus was actually fitted with a plumbed-in fire extinguisher system, but this failed to operate effectively," explains Heather wryly. "We think the problem was the nozzles hadn't been fitted at the correct angle, which is the reason why it partially failed."

Further problems arose while the Bus was going through the insurance claim for the engine fire. Parts of it were repainted, but the engine was in bits and the gearbox still needed to be re-fitted, after being repainted red again. Eventually, after six months of waiting, it was removed from this garage on a low loader as well, this time heading to the hero of this story, VW specialist, Harry Harpics & Sons Ltd (www.harryharpics.com) in Leigh on Sea, Essex. There, Paul Miller and his son, Kyle, took the Bus under their protective wing and things were looking up again.

Deep throaty note

While some of the engine parts were salvageable after the fire, it was agreed to start again from scratch with a new engine case and top and tail the engine with a new set of twin Weber 34ICT carburettors and a Vintage Speed stainless steel exhaust that makes for a very neat fitment and emits a pleasing throaty note. Meanwhile, Peter Englezos at Cog Box was entrusted with rebuilding the gearbox.

The engine and bay has since been

Creative Engineering rear safari window lets fresh air flood in

The striking paintwork of Porsche Hellgelb and Volkswagen Ivory dictate that Ray-Bans are *de rigueur* on sunny days!

Prior to restoration, looking very scruffy and not a pretty sight! Patches of primer were a short-term attempt to keep corrosion at bay

The Bus after sandblasting – a process guaranteed to reveal the tiniest details of corrosion

Original Danbury interior had definitely seen better days and was ripe for a total makeover

When bought, the Bus was still on its original 1600cc engine, still running, but tired and down on power

After the engine fire, it was decided to base the new 1641cc engine on a new case. Harry Harpics & Sons got the gig for the rebuild

Heather and her father restoring the louvred side windows at home on the kitchen table!

beautifully colour coded in red, yellow and black to complement the rest of the Bus. Another automatic Fireboy extinguisher system has been installed, a little more carefully this time. Hopefully, this one will never need to operate.

The rest of the Bay's running gear is all pretty much new or refurbished, which includes the braking system (discs on the front), telescopic dampers and a new wiring loom. "I also had a brake servo fitted, which is really quite noticeable and has made a big difference," reports Heather. The suspension, which has also been painted Porsche Signal Red, has been lowered just a tad.

"I purchased a set of Porsche 356 15-inch steel wheels and some adapters from Butty's Bits," continues Heather. "I've had these painted in Porsche Signal Red, too. To these I have fitted a set of KdF-style hubcaps that I've had chromed. There's also a pop-out rear window, and the louvred side windows were taken apart, polished and re-fitted – a job that my father helped me with, and was undertaken on his kitchen table!

Watch this space...

"The Bay was finally back on the road again in very late August last year. It's still not quite finished as the Propex heater pipes need some attention before I can use it for camping, and there are a few other modifications we intend to do, so watch this space…"

The restoration of Heather's Bay, which she affectionately calls the Little Yellow Bus, has not been without its problems, and Heather readily admits there were plenty of tears along the way, but she says she is more interested in looking to the future now than dwelling on the low points.

There has certainly been triumph over tragedy, and the Bay has been transformed from a rather tired and scruffy runner into a gleaming, wonderfully detailed gem, which has already picked up two Top 10 awards – one on its debut at VW Action, the other at Grill-n-Chill.

Restoring this Bay hasn't been cheap so, to recoup some of the outlay, enterprising Heather has decided to make her Bus available for weddings, proms and corporate events. With the aid of multi-talented artist and web designer, Ros Ingram, she has set up Little Yellow Bus Classic VW Campervan Hire (www.littleyellowbus.co.uk). It's bound to be popular with VW enthusiasts looking for top quality! ■

"transformed from a rather tired and scruffy runner into a gleaming, wonderfully detailed gem"

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Classic scenario

Imagine it, a 30 year-old running one of the country's most admired restoration businesses? The man in question is Dean Jones and we called in for a chat

Words and photos Ian Cushway

The Classic Car Revival crew from left to right: Frank, Dean, Joel and Diesel standing guard at the front. Chris wasn't working when we popped by

The air-cooled VW scene has its fair share of old duffers. And I should know, because I'm one of them. We all remember the old Actions, *Beetling*, and the days when you could still buy an oil change gasket from a main dealer parts department. I could bore the pants off just about anyone with my VW-related yarns if they had the patience to listen. Dean Jones, on the other hand, is a member of a new band of energetic, knowledgeable and above all extremely talented air-cooled enthusiasts who hasn't the time to get buried in nostalgia. Yes, he's interested in what went before, but he's too busy running one of the UK's foremost restoration businesses, located on the outskirts of Baldock in Hertfordshire, to listen for too long. Having grown up in that area, it seemed only polite to call in for a cuppa, kick some tyres and find out precisely what makes Classic Car Revivals tick.

VolksWorld: **Wow, this is a pretty impressive workshop, Dean. Ooh, I like the Porsche and the late, black Cabrio**

This double door panel van was used as a work van by 'Franks Burner Services' in Pennsylvania. The company still exists today. It was imported last year and the plan is to repair the metalwork and fully restore the underside and inside and put it on air ride

over there. So, go on, tell me where all this started and how you got where you are today…

Dean: *Hmmm, where to begin. Well, I bought my first Beetle when I was 15. A neighbour had one and I fell in love with it. I was always interested in mechanical things, so I started doing an evening class while doing my A-levels. I ended up taking a degree in sports science at Winchester but realised I didn't have the patience for teaching. I loved cars, so I got a job with a couple of local specialists. In 2011 I set up my own business and moved here in 2015. I'd got no ties, so it was a good time to do it. I spent 18 months on my own, then got my neighbour, Frank, in to help out and he's been here ever since."*

VolksWorld: **So, do you do all the work in-house at Classic Car Revivals?**

Dean*: Yes, we do all the metal fabrication and restoration work. I used to farm out the paint jobs but got messed around too much and eventually built my own spray booth here and now employ a full time sprayer, Chris, and bodyworker, Joel. We don't get involved with the insides, we have a trimmer that comes in and does that.*

VolksWorld: **So you've been here two years, how's it working out?**

Dean: *Good, thanks. We've got 12 months' work on the books and we've built several*

> "when we got married, we asked for contributions towards the Bus restoration rather than wedding gifts"

^ As values have risen, so has the extent of restorations which involve total, bare 'shell up rebuilds

> Pretty much everything can be tackled in-house, including custom engine rebuilds

Hopefully you would have seen Chris Woolsey's 1969 Dormobile Bay at The VolksWorld Show. In this picture the underside has been epoxy primed, seam sealed, stone chipped and is now being painted

show cars since being here. We did a '66 Beetle that was at The VolksWorld Show in 2015 and of course there's my '71 Bus that appeared on the turntable in 2016.

VolksWorld: **Ah, yes, the showstopper that appeared on the cover of our November 2016 issue. Tell us again how that came about…**

Dean: *I bought it in 2008 and it was very rusty. In fact, I kept the front panel to remind me just how bad it was. My wife, Becks, and I used it for camping holidays before I decided to restore it. I knew what I wanted to do with it, and I needed it to be spot on so I could use it to promote the business. The problem is, we didn't have much money so when we got married, we asked for contributions towards the Bus restoration rather than wedding gifts. It took a long time getting all the parts, but we got there in the end and it got a top 20 at Spa – something I'd only ever dreamed of.*

VolksWorld: **What's the biggest challenge you face as a restorer?**

Dean: *I guess a large part of the job is managing people's expectations. With virtually every restoration we do, there's an emotional attachment involved and if a customer is working to a budget you need to be honest with them. It's important to establish a relationship where they trust what you are saying, which is why we often become good friends with people by the end of the process. The problem is, there's lots of Buses out there that have been done up to sell, so you don't know what you are*

> “You need to be at the top of your game, have pride in what you do and be prepared to push yourself”

Dean started up on his own in 2011 and moved to these premises on the outskirts of Baldock in Hertfordshire in 2015

dealing with until it's been stripped and blasted. It's really only when you get to that stage you can give a fixed quote.

***VolksWorld:* What are people going for these days when it comes to spec?**
Dean: *Mostly, if people have owned their Beetle or Bus for a long time, they ask us to make it look like it did when they first got it. The majority want things left fairly stock with mild upgrades, so it might sit a bit lower, have a slightly bigger engine. First and foremost, they want it to be usable and practical. Obviously if we are doing a complete restoration, we can talk through the precise specification before we start. So, for example, if the owner wants a Propex heater, we can make the necessary holes and weld the heater tubes in place before the body preparation begins. Likewise, if it needs lowering we can notch the chassis or fit bigger wheel tubs. We do everything to a factory finish. With every mod we do, we always like to take things one step further.*

***VolksWorld:* What's your work ethos, what gets your goat?**
Dean: *I've never really been into the whole slammed thing because I like to use cars and the only way you can achieve that look is with hydraulics and air. My ethos is making a classic vehicle more practical for modern life. Sometimes I think the VW scene is stuck in its ways with the whole lowered on Fuchs, signwriting, rat look approach. I like things that are a bit more unique, and that's perhaps a sentiment that's shared by a newer generation of younger guys like me.*

***VolksWorld:* What about the standard of restorations these days, what's your take on that?**
Dean: *As the value of our cars have gone up, so has the level of workmanship. People no longer bodge Buses or Beetles, they carry out proper nut and bolt restorations because they're beginning to see their cars as an investment. There's more people like us doing things as they should be done. We don't get involved with quick makeovers that will rust through again six months later. It's bad for business!*

***VolksWorld:* How do you see the current market for old VWs?**
Dean: *Well, what can I say? I thought the bubble was going to burst eight years ago, and Split Buses have tripled in value since then. That said, there's a wide range of values out there. A mint 23-window Split Bus could be £100,000, but you can still pick up a Late Bay for £4000. Likewise, a really nice Oval might be £30,000 but a mid-'70s Beetle can still be had for as little as £1500. Being such a mass produced vehicle, you can pick from either end of the price spectrum.*

***VolksWorld:* What models would you like to see more of?**
Dean: *I love the quirky models, like the Brazilia. Also, you don't see that many Type 3s – so I'd like to see more of those at the shows.*

***VolksWorld*: So where do you go from here?**
Dean: *We aspire to become one of the top builders, and we're continually raising the bar with everything we do. With social media, you get to see what other people are doing and you have to be good. You need to be at the top of your game, have pride in what you do and be prepared to push yourself.* ■

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Dean keeps the original front panel from his show winning Bay. To remind him of how bad it was, presumably

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Catching the Bug

We're not in the business of preaching to the converted but, suffice to say, if you're interested in buying a Beetle, now might be the time to do it. Here's our starter guide to enable you to sort the nuggets from the nails...

Words Ian Cushway **Photos** Laurens Parsons, Simon Cooke, Jon Cass

It's no coincidence the Beetle was called the 'people's car' because during its eight decade production lifespan it has remained one of the most loved, and indeed one of the most fun, vehicles you can buy. As it's enjoyed such a long and glorious history, the hard bit is generalising about the various models. Obviously, there's a big difference between a Split Window Beetle from the early 1950s and a curved 'screen, MacPherson strut-equipped 1303 Beetle made two decades later. That said, the basic ethos was the same – in other words, an air-cooled engine in the back powering the rear wheels, a platform chassis, bolt-on wings and that wonderfully distinctive, bug-like shape.

This guide is geared more towards newcomers than seasoned air-cooled aficionados, so we make no apologies for starting with some of the basics. The idea is to help people avoid rookie errors and, if we can prevent one newly converted VW enthusiast from buying a total shed, then it's job done.

> "There's no getting away from the charm of the metal dash, flat-screen models"

Which model?

Beetles from the 1950s and early '60s are considered the most 'pure' but, unsurprisingly, feel more agricultural compared to their successors. Owners will argue that's all part of their charm, of course. The 1300cc and, in particular, the 1500cc from 1966 and '67 respectively were a big step on from the flaccid 1200cc in terms of overall driveability.

The switch from torsion bar to MacPherson strut front suspension, initially on the flat windscreen 1302 in 1971, was the single biggest change in design in the car's production, and makes for a totally different driving experience. The Beetle reached its technological zenith with the arrival of the Super Beetle, with its rounded windscreen and curvy plastic dash two years later.

Which you choose is up to you. There's no getting away from the charm of the metal dash, flat-screen models (which continued in production alongside the more modern versions right through until the very last Mexican Beetles in 2003), and they're much firmer with less body roll than the heavier, MacPherson-equipped Bugs. But, as far as creature comforts, ride quality and visibility goes, things undeniably got better with time. The 1303S, with its 1600cc engine, higher top gear and front disc brakes will feel much more at ease in modern traffic.

The great thing about any era of Beetle is that as you move through the wonderfully precise gearbox, it will still feel surprisingly eager and, given the right conditions, will happily cruise at motorway speeds without too much drama, even if speed does tail off up the hills!

There was a semi-automatic, which scores for its rarity, but try before you buy as the driving experience isn't to everyone's tastes.

BEETLE TECH SPEC

Model	1200	1300	1500	1302/3S
Year	1957-2003	1966-'67	1967-'70	1971-'75
Engine	1192cc	1285cc	1493cc	1584cc
Bhp	30-34	40bhp	44bhp	50bhp
0-60mph	32.1secs	23secs	22secs	18.4secs
Top speed	72mph	79mph	84mph	84mph
Transmission	4spd manual	4spd man	4spd/semi auto	4spd
Economy	32mpg	79mph	32mpg	34mpg
Suspension	Independent torsion bar front and swing axle rear **1302/3:** Front: MacPherson strut, rear: independent with CV joints			

1584cc engine as found in the 1302S / 1303S will feel a lot less flaccid than the 1200. Arguably, though, the single port 1500cc was the strongest unit of the lot

Engines

As you are no doubt aware, air-cooled VW engines are an engineering work of art, with beautifully finned, horizontally opposed, aluminium cylinder heads cooled, naturally, by air forced over them from within an enclosed fan housing. Its lifeblood is a plentiful supply of fresh engine oil, itself cooled by its own cooler located either behind or within the fan housing. Hence why regular oil changes, as frequently as every 3,000 miles, using a top quality 15w40 mineral oil plays a key role in keeping everything running sweetly. Look for evidence that the owner's been suitably vigilent.

In truth, many of the Beetle's worst engine woes result from a lack of maintenance, and subsequent overheating, so it's important to ensure everything is set up properly – the fan belt is not slipping, the ignition timing is spot on and nothing is restricting the fan (such as the firewall card at the back of the engine bay!). Worn or incorrectly adjusted carbs and leaks from the twin port inlet manifold rubbers can cause the engine to run lean, which will also make the engine run hotter than it should. Cylinder no.3 is invariably the one that cooks itself first.

A compression test provides a good indication of general health. You should expect 100psi on all four cylinders and between 110-120psi on a freshly rebuilt engine.

Another good indication of a worn engine is the amount of end float in the rear main bearing – you can check by tugging the bottom pulley to see if there's excess play. If the crank moves back and forth with an obvious clunk, you'll eventually need a rebuild, or replacement engine.

Other issues include cracked cylinder heads, which leads to loss of compression, oil leaks form the pushrod tube seals, flywheel oil seal and worn valve guides resulting in blue smoke on start up.

The curved 'screen 1303 model is currently undervalued. It's also nice to drive, courtesy of MacPherson strut independent suspension at the front

Curve ball?

Later curved 'screen 1303 models are cheaper to buy, but tend to rot more than earlier cars and spares can be more expensive. Especially if you have to replace front suspension components, the steering rack and CV joints etc. They will never have the same 'scene cool' either.

Running gear

Early VW gearboxes are precise and usually pretty robust, although loss of synchromesh can spoil things. It goes without saying that replacing the clutch plate is an engine-out job.

The Beetle features two types of front suspension – torsion bar (initially king and link pin up until August 1965, thereafter balljoints) and MacPherson strut on 1302 and 1303 models. At the rear there is a swing axle, which means there are two half axles that pivot from the gearbox rather than a single solid one. On 1302, 1303 and semi-automatic models, you'll find CV (constant velocity) joints at the gearbox and hub ends of both axles. Such models offer a vast improvement in road holding.

The earlier torsion bar front beams feature grease nipples, so maintenance is pretty straightforward. When king pins wear it's an MoT failure and replacement requires specialist tooling. On MacPherson strut arrangements, check the top mount for wear, as well as the condition of all the tie rod rubbers.

The vast majority of Beetles employ a worm and roller steering box (access is gained through an inspection hole under the bonnet) and some minor adjustment can be made to the roller by backing off the lock nut and turning the adjusting screw slowly clockwise until the play disappears. If you overtighten, the steering will be reluctant to return to centre.

There are all manner of ways to modify a Bug's suspension, ranging from dropped spindles to coilover kits and air ride. Lowering undoubtedly makes a Beetle look more cool, but it's important to check how (and how well) it has been done.

Even ancient Beetle drum brakes can be perfectly adequate if properly adjusted, so slam on the anchors while on a test drive to see if they pull up in a straight line. The switch to discs at the front on 1500 models in 1967 was a revelation but only certain models made the change, so it was still possible to buy a 1200 with drums up until very late in production. Leaky wheel cylinders and rusty brake lines are commonplace, so when viewing a car that's been sat around for years, factor in the cost of renewing the whole system. Early Beetles (up until 1967) were all 6V, which is fine if all the earths are good and you don't do much night time driving, but 12V is better, and many cars have been converted over the years.

^ Excessive movement when rocking the lower pulley points to a worn rear main bearing – not a good sign. Rebuilt bottom ends (where you have to swap all the ancillaries) start at £850

Interior

Beetle interiors can last well, although chances are many will have had a re-trim. This means it's a case of seeing just how well it's been done, how good it looks, and deciding how original you need things need to be. Like the exterior, some ageing or patina inside can add character, but too much and it can look like a basket case. Once again, the good news is everything is available, even down to the original style material for the earliest Split Windows, so you could soon have it looking like factory again. Indeed, from replacement seat padding to complete seat cover sets, there's no limit to what you can do with time and the necessary skills.

The hood on the convertible Beetle is a complex affair with a folding metal frame, horsehair padding, headlining and a glass rear window, which even featured a heated element on later models. Properly fitted with fresh rubber seals (all still available), the whole affair should be water tight and create minimal wind noise. However, hoods shrink with age and seals perish (many Cabriolets for sale in the UK will have been imported from hot climates such as Florida or California), allowing water into the car where it can rot out the floorpan – so putting off buying a replacement hood is false economy.

With the hood folded down, don't forget to engage the two frame clips each side to prevent vibration – and always fit the hood bag if you have one to prevent the headlining getting dirty. Be aware that rearward visibility is not great in Cabriolets as the hood sits on the rear deck, rather than folding down into it. Replacement headliners, padding and outer skins are all still available, but fitting is probably best left to a specialist.

< Many Beetle interiors will have had a retrim by now so it's a case of assessing how well it's been done

> Plastic dash in 1303 adds sophistication – and a clock – but doesn't have the same character as the Beetle's traditional metal facia

^ Don't underestimate the cost of making a Beetle's inside look good again. As a guide, a specialist trimmer like Bromsgrove (01527 576643, www.bromsgroveautotrim.com) will do a 'top' job and charge roughly £2500 to retrim the seats, headlining, doorcards and carpets

Bodywork

Beetle projects start at £800, though '60s cars will always be more. But be careful – full restorations swallow cash quickly, especially if you pay someone else to do the work

Corrosion is the biggest threat to a Bug's survival. Rust can, and does, attack anywhere and everywhere – the only positive being that you can buy replacement panels and repair sections for just about every affected rotten bit of metal.

The worst areas include heater channels, which run the length of the car along the sides (if the running boards are hanging off, this could be why), the spare wheel well, the bumper mountings front and rear, door bottoms, wing edges, boot and bonnet seams (and lips) and the lower rear quarter panels. The car's platform chassis can also rust badly, especially in the front footwells, the framehead (where the front axle bolts on) and in the corners under the rear seat. If you end up getting a specialist to replace both heater channels and the floorpan, you're looking at the best part of £4,000 straight away. The viability of a rotten car will depend on your wallet and / or welding skills – you just need to ask yourself whether the time and effort involved might be better spent paying more for a sound car in the first place.

The wings bolt directly onto the inner wing and you should expect to have at least a couple of bolts sheer off when attempting to undo them. Fitting new bumpers can transform the look of a Beetle, and now they're even available in stainless steel. If a car has been retro-fitted with US-spec 'towel rail' bumpers with the extra overrider bars, make sure they have been properly secured with the appropriate support tubes that go through the wings.

This is what you don't want to find. Floorpans start at £280 a side plus you're looking at £300 a side to weld them in. And that's the bare minimum…

BEETLE HISTORY

1935
First prototypes produced

1945
Post-war production begins with the first 1,785 Beetles made in a factory near Wolfsburg, Germany

1950
First Cabriolet Beetle produced at Karmann's Osnabrück factory

1953
Split rear window replaced by an oval, engine capacity grew from 1131cc to 1192cc, first Beetle sold in the UK

1958
Oval rear window replaced by larger, rectangular rear 'screen

1964
'Pope's nose' number plate light replaced by a wider unit, introduction of deeper side windows and larger windscreen

1966
1285cc engine appears, badged '1300'

1967
1493cc (1500) engine made available, electrics upgraded from 6V to 12V, headlights changed from sloping to upright

1968
Squarer 'Europa' bumpers replace smaller 'blades', bigger rear lights fitted and a semi-auto 'Stick Shift' made available with 1500cc engine

1971
1302 introduced with MacPherson strut front suspension and independent rear suspension, allowing the spare wheel to be stowed flat under the bulbous bonnet; 1584cc (1600) engine also now available on S models

1973
1303, or Super Beetle, launched with same MacPherson strut and IRS arrangement, but curved 'screen and plastic dash, different wings and round rear light lenses. 1303S has the 1584cc engine

1978
Production finishes in Germany but continues in Brazil and Mexico

1980
Last Cabriolet built in January (for the US market)

2003
Last ever Beetle rolls off the production line in Puebla, Mexico. The final batch of 4,000 Beetles were sold as 2004 models, badged as Última Edición with whitewall tyres

What to pay?

How long is a piece of string? Beetle values have been on the up over the last couple of years, but they are still refreshingly affordable, especially compared to VW Buses.

The least expensive models are the curved 'screen 1303s and the mid-'70's flat-'screen cars, which start at around £3,000 for a runner with an MoT, but not a restored or low mileage original. Basket cases from this era can be had on the nation's favourite online auction site for as little as £800. Expect to pay much stronger money for an early '60's car with £4,000 likely to be the starting price for one of these with a ticket but needing lots of work. An Oval rear window Beetle that you can drive home will begin at £12,000, while a really nice '50s car will be anything between £15,000-£20,000. Top money for a mint early Beetle will be £30,000. Genuine Cabriolets invariably have a premium on them over their tin-top counterparts, particularly the far rarer 1950's and early '60's models. That said, you can still buy a perfectly respectable late '70's model for around £5,000-£6,000. Quite the opposite is the case of cars that have been made into convertibles.

With the advent of the internet, it has become much easier to buy cars from abroad, but there are a lot of people searching for that perfect sound, original, low mileage, rust-free car. Many of the better ones come from either the States or Sweden, but not exclusively.

With the popularity of patina these days, you'll often find similar amounts are asked for solid early cars as are asked for those that have undergone a complete restoration, so price up any work needed carefully before embarking on such a project.

In our opinion, the best candidates for long-term ownership are cars that haven't previously been welded or played around with too much. And certainly don't rule out buying a left hooker, provided you are happy with the driving position of course.

At the end of the day, a good, sorted, German-built Beetle will always hold its value. While they have their own following, Mexican-built Beetles don't hold quite the same kudos, and this is usually reflected in lower values.

^ Don't worry too much about a Beetle's mechanicals when buying – virtually everything is readily and cheaply available

Beetles from the '70s represent good value for money – one with an MoT but with plenty of jobs left to do will start at £4,000

Factory spec Oval rear window Beetles are always sought after, although you'll need to pay in excess of £12,000 if you want one

Verdict

If properly sorted, the Beetle is still a hoot to drive, brilliant fun to own and generally well suited to regular use. Even 6V models really can be driven every day, provided the electrics are in good nick.

The best ones to buy are those that have remained unmolested, so you can see what you are getting. Trying to put right someone else's bodges isn't a good scenario. Don't pay good money for ones that have been poorly restored and may need doing all over again. Likewise, don't embark on a full-on restoration unless you know what you are letting yourself in for because costs can quickly spiral out of control – especially if you are paying someone else to do the work.

The good news is there are still plenty of Bugs about, so pick one from the generation that interests you the most and fits your budget. The fact you can buy just about everything to bring a project car back to good health means you can do as much or as little of the work yourself as you choose. And once it's in fine fettle, service items and parts to make a Beetle run and look even better are in plentiful supply, so the love affair is likely to be long lasting.

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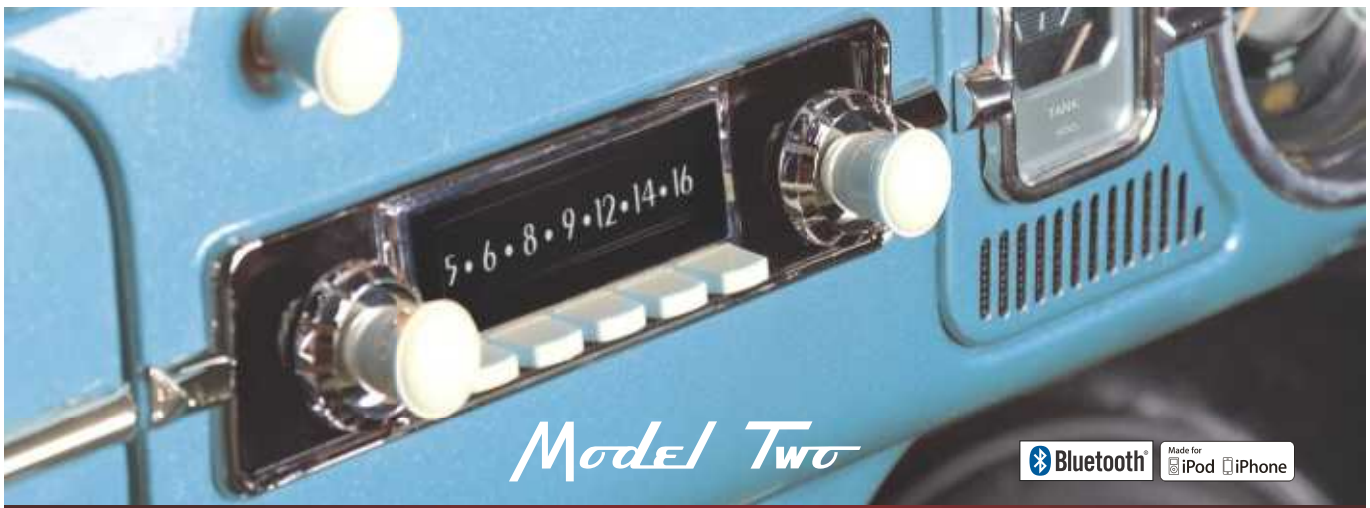

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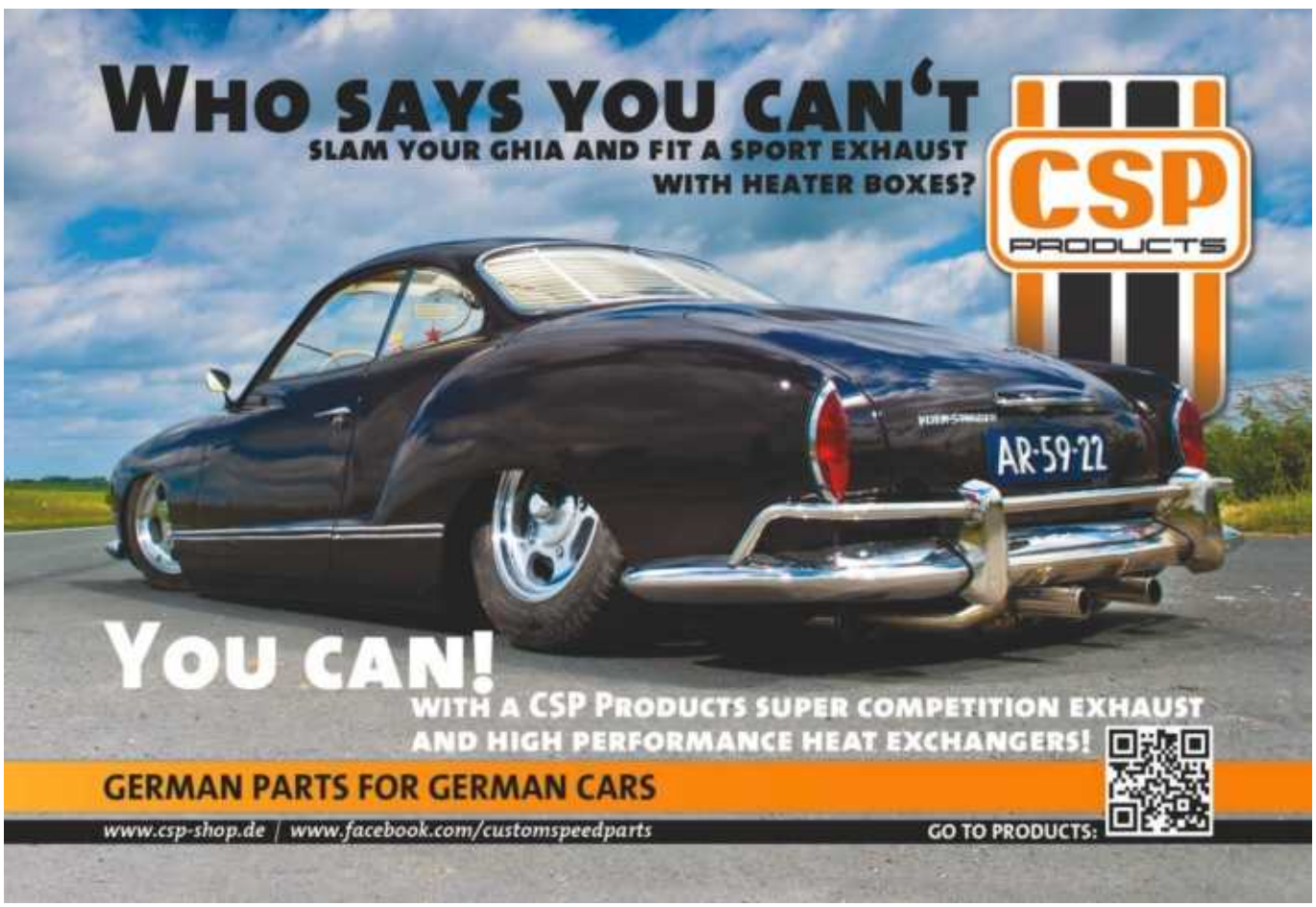

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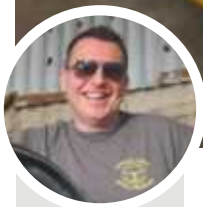
Wing beading on, one-piece windows in and wiring happening. What's not to love about this stage of the build?

Headlining is the poverty stricken Sparkafer version so it's an easy peasy fit



OWNER INFO

NAME
Cathal O'Toole

OCCUPATION
Beetle collector

CARS OWNED
GT Beetle, '77 Cal Look Beetle

WORK THIS MONTH
Paintwork and general re-assembly

A sprint to the finish!

It might be in paint but Cathal's genuinely worried about the time it's taking to bolt everything back on

As I write, The *VolksWorld* Show is just two weeks away and my Cal Looker is nowhere near ready to make the trip from Ireland to Esher. By the time you read this the show will be over, so if you were there you'll know whether I was joking or not…

I've discovered what can slow down the restoration or resurrection of a Beetle like this is the work involved recreating a particular period or style. Many of the 1980's parts are no longer available and, let's face it, people don't tend to have a stash of parts from this era sitting around. For example, the interior is the same one that Eoin fitted as new, out of the box back in 1987 so I will be reusing it. The problem is, 30 years on, it's now beginning to show its age with scuffs and tears that I had long forgotten about.

The paintwork itself, as you can see, is progressing well. Project Dayglo is now in its yellow finery and the body has been bolted back onto the rebuilt chassis. The fuel filter bracket I ordered from Kevin Brown on TheSamba.com arrived and was the last piece of the chassis jigsaw.

Corbeau GT seats are test fitted on new mounts. I just need to get my non Corbeau ass in there now!

It's a genius piece of kit, securing the filter safely in place on the gearbox away from the heat of the engine.

When Tom laid down the Lancia yellow we didn't realise just how bright it would be but now that parts are being bolted back on it's toning down. Phew!

End in sight?

Once everything had been painted, it was a case of adding all the bolt-ons such as the wings, doors, bonnet and engine lid. I love this stage as it starts to look like a real car at last and you can almost see the light at the end of the tunnel. Speaking of lights, the Rossi headlights were taken out of their NOS boxes and installed. I love them, although the sealed beam is a pain in the butt as one of them has blown already! The joys of 30 year old NOS parts I suppose.

The floorpan and body are fully lined with sound deadening throughout. The new headliner, all the glass (apart from the windscreen) and the louvred firewall

'77 Cal Look Beetle

As the A-Team's Hannibal would say "I love it when a dash comes together"... or something like that!

That's my new Mountney steering wheel about to be installed. The factory one is long since gone

How the heck am I supposed to get new rubber on my colour coded ATS rims without chipping the paint?

NOS Cal Look script dates this car as a B289 survivor. Grafted vent looks like a factory fit, even if I say so myself

Tinware is painted and trial fitted. The engine is about to be degreased ready for the yellow dress up kit

Let there be light! NOS 1980's Rossi headlights waited 30 years to be fitted

> "let's face it, people don't tend to have a stash of parts from this era sitting around"

Graham gave me is back in. The dash gauges are fitted and a new Mountney steering wheel arrived just a few days ago. I need to fit the new radio but that's pretty much it apart from the aforementioned seats and door cards. Don't get me wrong, they could go in as they are but I'm being fussy. And now that I see the fresh yellow and black paint I'd like them to be perfect.

Code comfort

I never realised just how many individual pieces needed to be colour coded on project Dayglo. For example, the door handles, engine lid lock, running boards, engine tinware and wheels all needed to be painted separately which was a nightmare for Tom. Not as much of a nightmare, I presume, as it was when I arrived at the VW Spares workshop with a new set of tools and a request to colour code them at the same time! Poor Tom thought that was it and then I said I wanted to colour code the backs of the bumper blades. Well, it's 1987 isn't it?

Jon and Tom have done a sterling job in getting the Cal Look to where it is and Trevor Brady should take a bow for all his welding at the start of the restoration. But we're not across the line yet... ■

Just a small selection of parts that needed to be colour coded on Project Dayglo

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All tanked up

Ian gets sick of smelling petrol and whips out the Beetle's fuel tank

OWNER INFO

NAME
Ian Cushway

OCCUPATION
Editor

CARS
'68 Beetle, T5 Transporter, Audi A6

WORK THIS MONTH
Fitting a replacement fuel tank

There's nothing more nauseating than the whiff of petrol fumes while driving. To be honest, it was only when I finally got round to filling up the tank that I noticed anything was wrong, which should have provided the necessary clue as to where the leak was coming from. None the less, climbing underneath I attempted to stop the drip from the exit pipe at the bottom of the tank by getting a spanner on the 22mm fitting. When that didn't work I identified the source of the drip as coming from the tank's seam. Hence the fact it only started leaking when it was filled to the brim.

A new tank was swiftly ordered from VW Heritage, along with a new fuel tank exit tube, complete with plastic filter. I went for a good quality Wolfsbürg West item.

> I opted for a top quality Wolfsbürg West tank – it's £190 from VW Heritage

Access all areas

Fitting a replacement tank is a reasonably straightforward affair. Basically, you drain off the old fuel, lift out the tank and fit the new one in its place. Okay, it's not quite that simple – but at most it will only take a couple of hours. I tried to grab a photo to show all the junk sitting in the bottom of the old tank, but didn't have much luck. Suffice to say, I used the drained off petrol in the mower instead of putting it back in the Beetle and running the risk of fuel contamination.

There's four 13mm bolts holding

New tank exit pipe has a plastic filter at the end to keep out the muck. Simple but clever

You need to remove these flexible filler pipes before taking out the old tank. There's a short section of soft rubber that fits over the end of the metal sections to help create a better seal

With the tank out, you get brilliant access to otherwise hidden steering components which is how I spotted this loose horn earth wire

> "Suffice to say, I used the drained off petrol in the mower instead of putting it back in the Beetle"

brackets to keep the tank in place, so once they've been undone, you've taken off and plugged the old fuel exit pipe, and undone the filler and breather hoses, you can lift it straight out. Oh, you obviously need to remove the fuel gauge sender unit that screws in the top as well.

With the tank out, you get brilliant access to usually hidden sections of the front chassis, as well as various steering and suspension components. I even got to discover why the horn had suddenly stopped working when I spotted a loose earth lead on the bottom of the column.

It also revealed, much to my relief, that the cross panel of the bulkhead wasn't toast – one of the virtues, I guess, of buying a car from a warm climate. It was also interesting to see a bit of the original Cobalt Blue paintwork, one of the rare bits of the Beetle's bodywork that the Portuguese restorer hadn't got to with the lighter blue hue.

Once I'd spent a few minutes busying myself with a wire brush brushing away some of the loose dirt, the new exit tube and fuel hose were fitted and the replacement tank dropped in. You have to be careful not to trap any of the headlight wires, but that's about it.

Return to sender

With the flexible filler hoses, breather and sender unit back in place, it was time to fill the smart new tank with fresh fuel. Holding my breath that there wouldn't be any leaks, I climbed underneath with a torch – and the good news is, everything was nice and dry.

I took a punt on which way to fit the sender unit, reckoning that the float ought to sit from left to right rather than dead forward. The fuel gauge wasn't reading previously, so having cleaned up the earth, checked all the connections and doused the rheostat with WD-40, I was hoping for a good result. It works now, after a fashion at least because it's constantly on the move flickering from empty to half-full. Looks like I'll be carrying a fuel can in the back then until I get a replacement. At least I won't be reminded of how much fuel's in the tank by that awful smell! ■

Despite giving the fuel gauge sender unit a squirt with WD-40, it still doesn't work. Usefully, the new tank came with a fresh rubber seal

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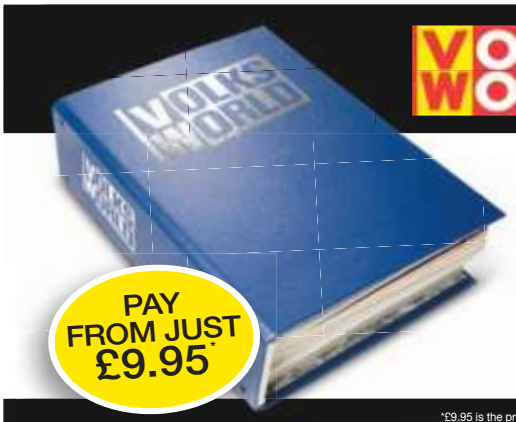

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VOLKS WORLD

Here's what's coming up in the June 2017 issue of *VolksWorld*, on sale Friday 5 May

Highly presentable

When your VW buddy offers a deal on a Westy as part of your birthday present it would be rude to turn it down. It turned out to be the gift that kept on giving

Don't miss it!

Raging Roman

From daily driver to radical VW-Pro drag racer, Shaun Hyde's '69 Beetle goes back to grass roots goodness

Used, not abused

Anita Ferrari owns one of the most original 1950s Export Beetles we've seen and she's not afraid to use it

Front beam swap

We show you how to renew a rusty front beam on a Beetle

Ditch the dynamo

Tired of having to rev the engine to make the windscreen wipers move? Find out how to upgrade from a dynamo to an alternator

Words and photos Rob Hawkins

The VW air-cooled engine's dynamo is efficient at recharging the battery, but when extra power is required to operate the headlights, indicators, wipers and stereo, then it often struggles to cope, especially if the engine is ticking over. In some situations a better solution is to replace the dynamo with a more modern alternator, which can produce electricity more efficiently and maintain a constant voltage, no matter what the engine is doing.

JOB INFO

TOOLS NEEDED
Angle grinder and grinding disc; breaker bar; die grinder; hammer; impact driver; large socket for drifting (30mm+); pliers; pry bar; rubber mallet; safety goggles; screwdrivers; sockets/spanners 10-19mm; vice; vice grips; volt/multimeter
MATERIALS USED
Clean cloths; M8 bolt; paper towels
TIME TAKEN
8+ hours
COST DIY
£170-£215

The dynamo on VW air-cooled engines can be changed for an alternator, requiring only a few wires to be altered and a number of new parts to be fitted. We visited Herbie Hospital of Leeds to follow them completing an alternator conversion on a 1.6-litre twin port engine using parts supplied by VeeWee.

The alternator conversion kit from VeeWee costs £141.30 and includes a new alternator, a stand, new tinware and a clamp (strap). You'll also need a new pulley and drivebelt (see Costs and Contacts for prices and part numbers). The original wiring can be adapted, but VeeWee also stock new wiring, which is quicker to fit.

Additional parts that may be required include a new oil filler neck, which is attached to the alternator stand. You can use the old filler neck that's secured to the dynamo's stand, but it's often seized to it and requires a special tool to remove it.

Some carburettors require a spacer to be fitted to clear the new alternator – we had this problem, but resolved it by trimming some metal off the body of the alternator (VeeWee recommend fitting a spacer plate).

Another problem that can sometimes arise concerns the pulley that is fitted to the front of the alternator. In our case, we found it fouled the alternator, but this was easy to fix by shaving a little metal off the back face. In some cases, such a problem can be resolved by fitting the old pulley from the dynamo or a different aftermarket one.

CONTACTS AND COSTS

Herbie Hospital, 0113 242 0029 www.herbiehospital.com

VeeWee, 0121 626 7981 www.veewee.co.uk (or visit your local GSF branch)

Alternator conversion kit (part number 904VG0100)	**£155.40**
Carburettor spacer plate (part number 181VG0520)	**£10.02**
New oil filler (part number 155VG0040)	**£15.24**
Wiring harness (part number 972VG0050)	**£19.80**
Fan belt (part number 133AA1160)	**£5.22**
Pulley (part number 904VG0050)	**£10.50**

Removing the dynamo

01 DRIVEBELT OFF
Disconnect the battery and undo the 19mm nut at the front of the dynamo, which holds the pulley and drivebelt in position. Wedge a screwdriver behind the pulley if it spins. Once undone, remove the belt, pulley and any shims or washers

02 DETACH THE CARB
If you have a single carburettor, remove the air filter and disconnect any wiring to it. Detach the throttle cable and extract the sleeving that travels through the fan housing

03 CLAMP FUEL HOSE

Use vice grips to clamp the fuel pipe that feeds into the fuel pump and disconnect the one that is connected from the pump to the carburettor – bung the end with a bolt and wipe up any fuel that spills out

04 REMOVE CARB

Remove the carburettor (doesn't apply to twin carbs) by undoing the two 13mm nuts that secure it to the inlet manifold. These can be awkward to access. Plug the hole in the inlet manifold with a clean cloth

05 DISCONNECT WIRES

Disconnect all the wires to the dynamo and regulator, then remove the regulator and any wires that were connected between it and the dynamo. Move any wiring aside that could be trapped when the dynamo is removed

06 UNDO THE CLAMP

Remove the dynamo's clamp (strap), which is fitted with a 13mm nut and bolt. Access isn't great, but, once undone, you will eventually be able to fully undo the nut and bolt and remove the clamp

07 HEATER PIPES

Remove the heater pipes inside the engine bay between the fan housing and heat exchangers. These are usually fitted with jubilee clips and are often corrugated and flexible, making them easy to crush and tear

08 FIND THE THERMOSTAT

If the heater has a thermostat to only allow warm air to be directed to the interior, then it needs to be removed. Look underneath the offside of the engine for a square piece of tinware, usually secured with 10mm bolts. Remove this to reveal the thermostat

09 REMOVE THE THERMOSTAT

Undo two 10mm bolts that secure a mount for the thermostat. After removing the mount, unscrew the thermostat. The thermostat needs to be removed to be able to raise the fan housing and remove the dynamo, but must be refitted

10 FAN HOUSING BOLTS

The dynamo is nearly ready to be removed. Look at each side of the fan housing for a small 10mm bolt. These need to be undone to be able to raise the fan housing and eventually remove the dynamo

11 DYNAMO TINWARE BOLTS

The dynamo is secured to the round tinware at the back of it, which is in turn secured with four 10mm bolts to the fan housing. The two top bolts are easy to undo, but the bottom bolts are tricky. Lever the dynamo up to access them

12 DYNAMO OUT

Removing the dynamo can take several minutes. Lever the fan housing and manoeuvre the dynamo until it comes out. Check the fan housing can move upwards and make sure nothing is trapping it

HOW TO
Convert to an alternator

Swapping parts

01 REMOVE DYNAMO STAND Remove the old dynamo stand by undoing four 13mm nuts – this is too small for the new alternator, so it needs to be replaced. Twist it round to ensure the long breather tube comes out

02 NEW BAFFLE PLATE AND GASKETS Fit two new gaskets and a new baffle plate onto the engine where the stand was fitted – the gaskets must sit above and below the baffle plate. The baffle plate must sit as shown here to ensure oil from the engine doesn't escape through

03 OIL FILLER NECK The old oil filler neck that's attached to the stand needs to be removed using a special tool and fitted onto the new alternator stand. If you don't have the tool, or the filler neck is seized, a new one costs £15.24 and is very easy to fit to the new alternator stand

04 REMOVE THE FAN Secure the dynamo in a vice, gripping the centre shaft. Use an impact driver to undo the large nut that secures the fan to the back of the dynamo. Remove the fan and any washers, then carefully prise off a top hat shaped spacer and undo two 10mm nuts to remove the tinware

05 NEW TINWARE Fit the new tinware from the alternator conversion kit onto the new alternator, making sure the hole in the second plate is at the bottom (the opposite side to the electrical connections on the alternator). Fit a new securing ring and two 10mm nuts

06 REFIT WOODRUFF KEY Transfer the Woodruff key from the old dynamo to the alternator, then fit the top hat shaped spacer – check the groove lines up with the Woodruff key. Use a hammer and large socket to drift the spacer into position

07 SHIM UP Fit a number of shims onto the top hat shaped spacer, then fit the fan. With the end of the alternator secured in a vice, rotate the body of the alternator to make sure it doesn't catch the fan. If it does, add another shim or two and test it again

08 TIGHTEN FAN NUT Secure the fan to the back of the dynamo with a selection of washers, followed by a large spring washer (it looks a little bent) and the large nut that was undone in step 4. Fully tighten this nut with a breaker bar and check once again that the fan rotates without fouling the alternator

Fitting the alternator

01 FIT THE STAND Fit the new alternator stand with the new gaskets and baffle plate that were fitted in step 2 of the previous section. Use a rubber mallet to tap the stand into position, then fit four new 13mm nuts with washers to secure it

02 FIT THE ALTERNATOR Manoeuvre the alternator into position, levering the fan housing up a little with a pry bar to help move the fan on the end of the alternator inside the fan housing. Refit the four 10mm bolts which secure the tinware to the fan housing

03 CLAMP THE ALTERNATOR Fit a new alternator clamp or refit the old one if it's easier. Fully tighten the 13mm nut and bolt, making sure the clamp is located around both the alternator and alternator stand. Spin the alternator to check its fan doesn't foul the fan housing

04 REFIT THE CARB If you have a single carb, then it will have been removed, so refit it now. Make sure the throttle linkage can be fully opened without fouling the body of the alternator. If the throttle linkage fouls the body of the carburettor, see the next step

05 CARB TROUBLE If the throttle linkage fouls the body of the alternator, you can either buy a spacer plate from VeeWee, or as we have done to save time, use a die grinder to remove some material from the side of the alternator. VeeWee recommends buying the spacer plate

06 WIRE-UP A wiring kit is available from VeeWee. Alternatively, fit a new thick wire between the positive terminal on the alternator and the positive terminal on the battery. Connect the starter motor cable that was routed to the dynamo, to the positive terminal on the battery. Connect the small wire for the dashboard's charge light directly to the alternator

07 PULLEY AND BELT Fit the two halves of the pulley on the front of the alternator along with a new belt and the old shims, washers and securing nut. Manually turn the engine on the crankshaft to see if the pulley fouls the alternator. If it does, you may need to trim the inner edge of the pulley with an angle grinder

08 TEST RUN When you have finished fitting the alternator and refitting all the parts (thermostat, throttle cable), reconnect the battery and start the engine. Use a multimeter to check the voltage at the battery and the alternator to check it is producing enough output and recharging the battery (14-15 volts)

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BEETLE

1970, £Offers. Semi auto, requires restoration, stored in garage since 1996. Complete with spare engine and gearbox, plus other parts. Fully independent rear suspension. Not swinging axle. Oxon. 01235 813004

BEETLE 1200

1972, £6,200 ono. Marina blue, restoration carried out in 2013 by professional restorer, costing over £12,000, tax exempt, bodywork is immaculate, engine refurbished, new tyres, new MoT, car has covered 502 miles since restoration. Tyne & Wear. 01915 845642

BEETLE 1200

1985, £7,500. Manufactured in Mexico, imported from Germany, right hand drive, one owner, unrestored, serviced every 1000 miles, fsh, alloy wheels, ss exhaust, MoTd until November 2017, good no plate. Devon. 01822 613277

BEETLE 1300

1973, 51,000 miles, £4,995. With 1300 reconditioned engine. New tyres, new bumpers. Tax exempt. MoT Feb 2018. Dorset. 07971 385242 (PB)

CADDY 2.0 TESI

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GOLF CABRIO MK1

1987, £2,750. 1800cc, good solid body and engine, MoT. Silver, blue, needs new hood, long ownership, now rare. S. Glos. 01179 563904 / 07582 148904 (SN)

GOLF CLIPPER CABRIO

1989, 83,899 miles, £4,000. Auto, Red, very good condition, new roof, MOT Nov 17. Surrey. 07717 085384

GOLF DRIVER

£800. Tornado red, 1.6 petrol, manual transmission, long MoT, used daily, would suit enthusiast, call after 6pm. Northamptonshire. 07941 803765

GOLF CABRIO CLIPPER MK 1

1987, £3,500. Small bumper. Good solid body and engine. Long MoT. Great potential, needs new hood. Long ownership. Call for more details. Gloucestershire. 01179 563904 or 07582 148908 (PB)

GOLF CABRIOLET

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VOLKSWAGEN RH

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1976, £POA. Richard Holdsworth interior and roof. 1.9 diesel engine, split screen front, drive away awning. Unfinished project. Non runner. Berkshire. 01635 46572 (RB)

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VOLKSWAGEN CARAVELLA T4

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VOLKSWAGEN DEVON EUROVETTE

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VOLKSWAGEN TYPE 2

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2013 VW T2 Danbury Rio 5 Seat Classic, 27,993 miles, 1.4 water-cooled engine, 2 burner gas hob & grill, sink, fridge freezer, leisure battery, 240v mains hook up, raising roof, 3-person rear seat & more. **£33,995.** Ref: 2829.

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Walking on water

To all the doubters out there, Robin Wager recounts the moment when a VW really did make a miracle happen

What do you think?
Got something you'd like to share with us? – email volksworld.ed@kelsey.co.uk

We all know how reliable the classic air-cooled Volkswagen engine is, but I'm sure there are many people (including VW enthusiasts) who don't know just what purposes it has served in its time.

Back in the good old 1960s, March '65 to be precise, we reported in *Safer Motoring* magazine on an outstanding British development which had recently made its debut at the Earl's Court International Boat Show.

The brainchild of a partnership between designer Robin Parkhouse and boatbuilder Malcolm Beckingham, the Scorpion was a small hovercraft – one of those devices which at the time was still regarded by many as a product of the devil!

"needing a reliable power unit which was already proven and available, you can guess which engine he chose"

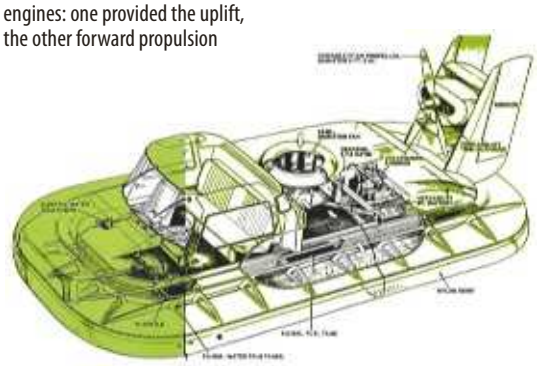
Cruising in safety at up to 45mph just 1.5-inches above water or land, it used three gallons of fuel an hour, while its compact size of 21ft by 7ft 6ins, and unladen weight of only 1400lb, allowed it to be trailered behind a family car. It was also intended as a craft for working groups or families, with space for five people in comfort. The cabin had two forward bucket seats (planned to be replaced by a bench seat for production) while the windscreen, offering good visibility in a spray-free area, came from a BMC Austin A55!

A formal aeronautical engineer and naval aviator, Robin Parkhouse regarded his design as basically a boat. And, needing a reliable power unit which was already proven and available, you can guess which engine he chose. In fact he chose two, requiring both a 'lift engine' (to provide upward thrust) and a 'propulsion engine' (for forward motion).

In order that they were best suited to their functions, these were in fact the industrial versions of the air-cooled unit familiar to Beetle owners, the multi-purpose units which had long been offered by Volkswagen, for everything from generators to sawmills, capable of working happily away in the background without, of course, boiling or freezing and with minimum maintenance.

A possible survivor? If you're the lucky custodian, let us know!

Robin Parkhouse, who lived near Chichester in Sussex, told *Safer Motoring*, "I decided to use two VW industrial engines because they are reliable, adaptable, comparatively inexpensive and economical. Some people may regard the VW engine as old-fashioned, but it is ideally suited to the Scorpion."



The Scorpion was a complex beast and featured two VW engines: one provided the uplift, the other forward propulsion

His basic aim was to keep costs to a minimum by making it all as simple and practical as possible. At the time of our report the Scorpion cost £2250 but Mr Parkhouse hoped that, with each VW engine costing less than £200, it should be possible to reduce the all-in price to just £1500 when quantity production began. If these costs sound cheap, it's worth pointing out that, at the time, the average UK wage was £20 per week and a pint of bitter cost just under two shillings (10p).

But what of the VW power units? The original 1192cc capacity was uprated to 1500cc.The high-mounted propulsion engine drove a Rollason Turbulent aircraft propeller, maximum engine speed being set at just over 4000rpm (which would allow a top speed of some 55mph, the usual running speed being 3800rpm). The uplift motor powered a 50-inch diameter, four-bladed Airscrew-Weyroc fan beneath a 54-inch vertical air duct with 16 radial flow guides, via a horizontal shaft and 90 degree gear drive. The standard 6-volt battery and electrical system were retained on the prototype engines but it was planned to upgrade to 12-volt in production.

We reported that the Scorpion was shortly due to undergo extensive trials over water, during which experimental 'skirt' attachments would be evaluated to permit the craft to operate with a raised cushion height of 18-inches, allowing it to negotiate uneven surfaces safely.

Robin Parkhouse emphasised that his 'baby' could operate over water, land, ice or swamp, making it ideal for use in under-developed countries and rough, uncultivated terrain. Production under licence, he told us, was already being discussed with a number of overseas organisations, including the Gambian government.

What became of it is unknown but if you're ever on the Sussex coast and hear the dulcet tones of two air-cooled engines at full chat then you might be in for a rare sighting.

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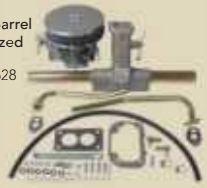

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